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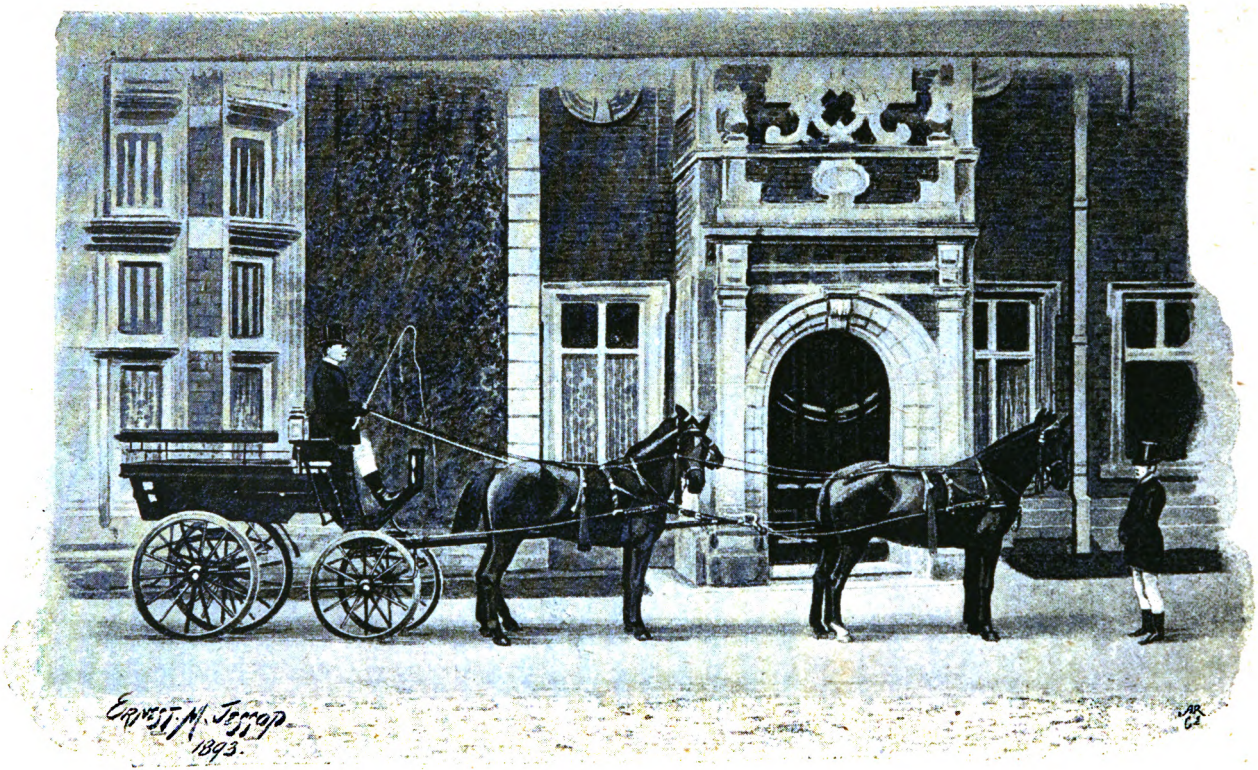

THE HUNGARIAN TEAM

THE IDLER

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Royal Pets.

No. II.—THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES'S PETS AT SANDRINGHAM.

By Ernest M. Jessop.

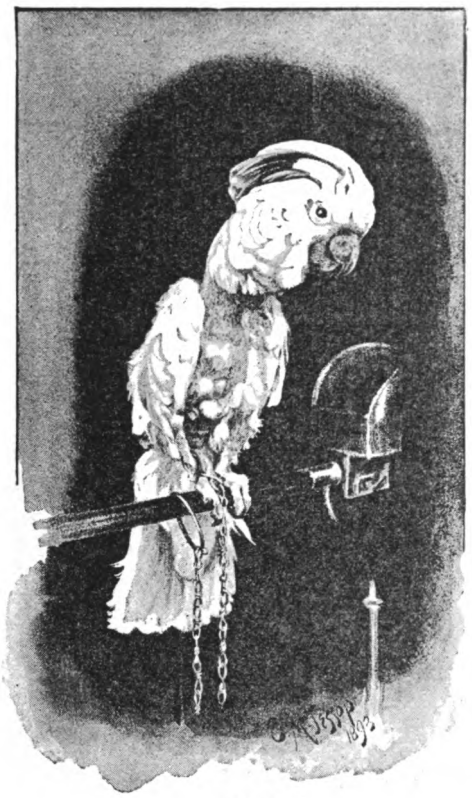
Illustrations by the Writer.

(*Photographs by Ralph W. Robinson, of Redhill.*)

I TAKE my seat in a G.E.R. through carriage, which would be fairly entitled to a prominent position in any well-kept museum of antiquities, and, after three-and-a-half hours of nerve-shattering and bone-shaking, arrive at the deliciously rural and beautiful village of Dersingham, or, as it is locally pronounced, "Daarsenem," Norfolk.

Here I am fortunate enough to be met by a smart horse and trap, and driven past the grand old church, with its handsome square tower, capped at each corner with stone figures of angels, along a winding rural road, bordered on either side with murmuring rivulets and hedges gay with the verdure of early spring. Here and there a glimpse is caught of a neat cottage surrounded by blossom-laden fruit-trees, and, among other very paintable bits, the remains of a fine old hall, faced in the picturesque local manner with "carr" stones of small size and reddish-brown hue, commands attention, before we pull up at the comfortable Feathers Inn. This sign is, of course, the well-known Prince of Wales's crest. After luncheon we continue our drive along the pretty country road, flecked with sunshine and shadow, to the entrance of Sandringham Park. Here our pace has to be momentarily slackened on account of the numbers of pheasants, rabbits, and birds of all kinds which are wandering about the road enjoying the brilliant sunshine. We then arrive at the main avenue leading to the Royal residence, so splendidly bordered with grand specimens of forest trees, especially spruce, larch and birch, which line the road on either side. Passing the well-known hammered iron Norwich gates, embellished in full heraldic colours with the Prince's arms, and admiring the avenue of limes leading to the house, we turn sharp to the left and

pull up at as snug a country house as one could wish for. This is the home of genial Mr. Jackson, head-keeper to the Prince, who, being very busy, as is usual on Fridays, after a short chat, leaves me to the hospitable care of Mrs. Jackson and W. Brunsdon, the keeper of the dogs. A more careful, attentive, and thoughtful guide it would be impossible to have; let us wish him all happiness in his marriage, which takes place, as I am told, within the next few days. Before entering the Kennels I am first shown a pretty little glass and brick-built house, which is nearly covered with foliage, and has its entrance framed in climbing roses. Here I make the acquaintance of the first, and certainly the most beautiful, of the Princess's pets. In the centre of the house, on a low wooden bench, stands a light wire aviary, inhabited by about twenty pure white doves, without speck or spot to mar their dainty plumage. Against a background of scarlet geraniums, surely as pretty a sight as one could wish to see. In another light wire cage on the left, or sunny wall, are a few more doves, and some very beautiful shy-looking Australian birds of small size and deliciously soft colouring. All these are special pets, the Princess, when in residence, never failing to feed them with her own fair hands Brunsdon, the keeper of the dogs, tells me their residence was formerly a monkey-house, and cordially agrees with me when I congratulate him on its change of inhabitants. Unwillingly leaving the pretty pets, we walk a few steps farther to the entrance of Brunsdon's comfortable



"COCKIE"

cottage, and are at once greeted with a prolonged whistle by perhaps the most privileged pet on the estate. This is "Cockie," a jolly-looking white cockatoo with a salmon-coloured crest surmounting his quaint and somewhat venerable countenance. With head sloped to one side, he balances himself on his metal perch with the double object of having his portrait taken and listening comfortably to the recital of his history. "Cockie," as is explained to me (the bird emphasising each sentence by alternately raising and lowering his crest, but maintaining strict silence), has an objection to wearing feathers during the present fine warm weather. In fact, he carefully removes from his person each one as it grows, with the sole exception of those on his head, neck, and tail, which he possibly thinks add dignity to his appearance, and enable him the better to support his character as the chief Royal pet. He has been in the possession of the Princess for the last fifteen or twenty years, and is exceedingly fond of her, as well he may be, considering his exceptional privileges. He was an inmate of the Princess's own dressing-room until the last twelve months, and has only been removed on account of the increasing power of his lungs. A terrific screech from "Cockie" here convinced me of the wisdom of the change of quarters.

As soon as the Princess is near enough to his perch when making her morning visit, "Cockie" holds her hand with his big black claw, and rubs his head against her with the greatest affection, evidently trying his utmost to show his gratitude for her many kindnesses. He now has a small, sunny room in Brunsdon's house allotted to him for a sleeping compartment, and looks in the best of health and spirits, although his appearance, minus his natural clothing, irresistibly reminds me of the far-famed Jackdaw of Rheims when under the ban of the Church.

Under the paternal eyes of Brunsdon and "Cockie" lives one of the prettiest and latest pets in dogs. This is twelve months old "Blackie," a present to the Princess Victoria from her Royal father. "Blackie" is a very small and singularly beautiful Spitz. With the exception of one tiny white patch on the chest, his coat consists of exceedingly long, silky, jet-black hair. He, like all the Royal dogs, has most engaging manners, but is at present of a very volatile disposition, which leads to a certain amount of difficulty in taking his portrait. In fact, as a sitter he almost justifies his name as an imp of darkness. I try whistling, Brunsdon talks,

the cleaner pets him; "Cockie," who really takes a marvellous interest in the whole affair, whistles some weird tune which sounds like a reminiscence of Wagner; but, says "Blackie," "The day is lovely, I am young and full of life, and although you are all awfully nice people, I don't want to stop still." Finally, in sheer despair, "Cockie" gives vent to a most awe-inspiring screech, which, for a few moments, has the desired effect of keeping him still while the portrait is made. "Blackie's" health when in London last winter gave cause for some anxiety (all these small Spitz dogs are of very delicate constitution), his weight being reduced to little over one pound, but country air has pulled him round, and he now weighs nearly four times as much. He was not taken to the Mediterranean on account of another slight indisposition, but goes to Marlborough House as soon as his mistress returns. His native place was Homburg, from whence he was brought by the Prince.

"BLACKIE."

The Princess is exceedingly fond of all her dogs, and the affection is mutual, every dog in the Kennels seemingly considering him or herself the special favourite. Here is a picture painted in words for me, and it would be difficult to find a prettier subject. When in residence it is Her Royal Highness's usual practice to visit the Kennels every morning, accompanied by her daughters and guests. Her dress covered with a large white apron, she is followed by Brunsdon, carrying two baskets filled with small square pieces of bread; the dogs, to the number of sixty or seventy, are then let loose in one of the small grass-covered enclosures, and the Princess feeds every dog in its turn. Needless to say, she is occasionally almost overwhelmed with their caresses.

The Princess names all her dogs herself, and knows each one by its proper name. Her particular pets are the quaint but

handsome smooth bassets, presented to her by Mrs. C. C. Ellis, and the Chinese dogs bred here from her old favourite "Plumpie," who always travels with her, and "Beatie," the Prince's pet white Pomeranian, who died in January last. "Plumpie" is known to fanciers as a red Chinese Chow Chow, and is a grand-looking dog, with a beautiful coat. She has been the Princess's travelling companion for many years. Her children mentioned above are—"Foxey," who just now lies basking in a sunny corner against a hot wall; and "Buz" and "Fuz," who are at present particularly interested in a small piece of meat held by Brunsdon. Their coats are very thick, of a rich light red colour, and they have light-coloured noses to match.

"PLUMPIE.

All the Chinese dogs when first brought here were very savage and self-willed, but in consequence of their kindly treatment, are now the most docile of creatures. Brunsdon seems to scorn the idea of whips being required in the Kennels, except as an adjunct to his dress livery. A notable instance of taming by kindness is "Tufi," a splendid-looking jet-black Chinese bitch, with curiously black tongue and palate. For some weeks after her first arrival she could not be touched without danger, but is now a most amiable animal. As a standard of comparison I may say that the Chinese dogs are about the size of ordinary collies.

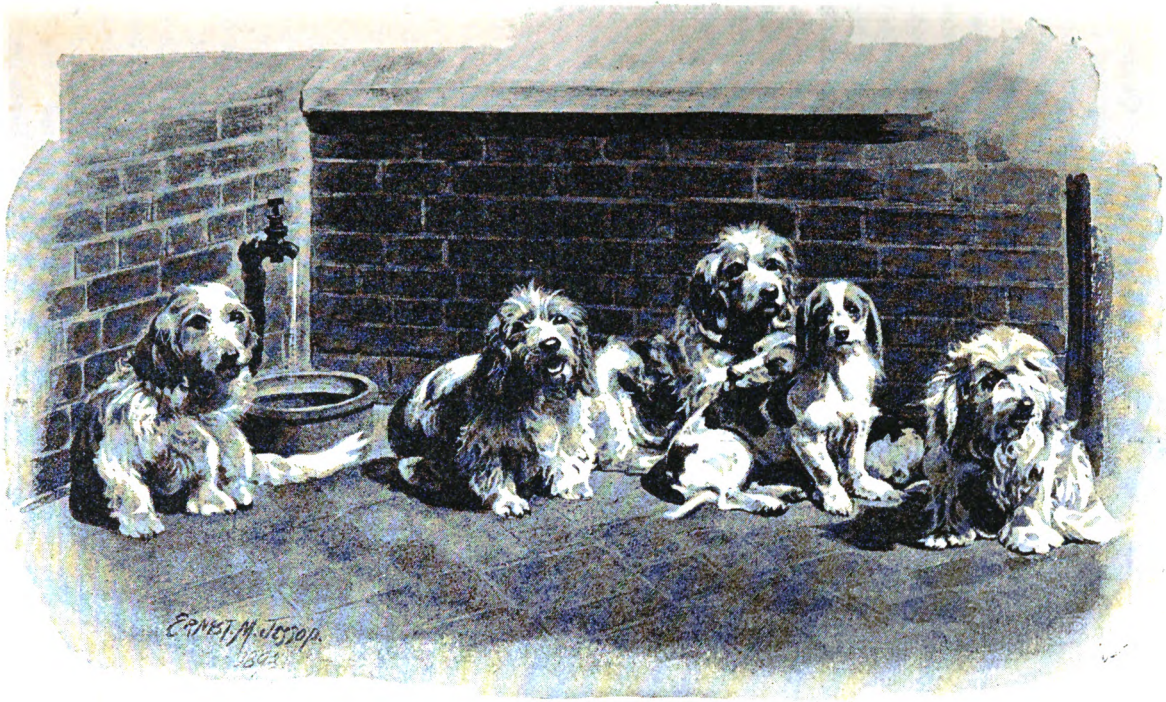
One of the Princess's smooth bassets is "Zero," a most uncommon-looking dog, possibly the finest of his breed in existence. His colours are black, white and tan. He has a superbly handsome head, with very long, drooping ears, and great, soft, melancholy brown eyes, the iris being curiously tinged with deep pink, which is considered to be an additional beauty in this fine breed. He is

larger than an ordinary dachshund, though resembling one in shape. There is also a natural wave in the black hair of his back, which adds to his artistic appearance.

"ZERO" AND "MARVEL."

"Marvel" is a black and white bitch of equally fine breeding and quality, but smaller and scarcely so taking to an artist's eye. Both these dogs seem singularly docile and affectionate, and are great favourites of the Princess. Another very old and special pet, who formerly travelled with Her Royal Highness, is "Bully," a very small, smart, and cheerful-looking fawn-coloured pug. "Bully" was a present from the Prince some years since, and is now getting on in life, but at present shows no outward signs of infirmity, with the exception of an increase in the supercilious expression which is so deliciously funny in her breed. She is fond of warmth, and at night insists on occupying a portion of her keeper's bed. The Princess also possesses a small black and white Japanese spaniel, but as he is at present travelling with her I could not procure a portrait.

"BULLY."



ROUGH BASSET HOUNDS

The next kennel I illustrate contains a most interesting group of the Prince's favourite rough basset hounds. Quaint and picturesque in shape, with their rough coats of grey and fawn, they are not only most artistic in appearance, but seemingly possess great intelligence, and altogether charming manners. "Babil" and "Bijou," the father and mother, are exceedingly pleased with the interest one naturally takes in their very handsome family. A word from the keeper is sufficient to ensure perfect quiet and order while their portraits are being taken. "Babil" and "Bijou" were imported by H.R.H. the Comptesse de Paris, and presented by her to the Prince. This pretty breed should be more widely cultivated, as they would make most charming home companions.

"PERLA."

Now we come to handsome, snow-white "Perla," one of the nicest dispositioned and most uncommon dogs in the Kennels. She is a Lapland sledge bitch, and was presented to the Prince by Baron Oscar Dickson in 1887, and is a great favourite with every one on the estate, where she has lived for many years. "Perla" has a most beautiful head, with mild, trustful dark eyes, and in colour and appearance is a wonderful contrast to her home companion, "Bizoff," a Norwegian dog, with a dark blue and rusty grey coat. An odd, archaic appearance has "Bizoff," with a fine bushy tail, and generally strong and sturdy appearance. He seems to thoroughly understand my interest in him, and stands like a statue to be inspected. He was brought by His Royal Highness from Norway. From here we move to make the acquaintance of the giant among the pet dogs, who, to speak truly, has for some time called attention to himself in a tremendous bass voice, heard above all others. This is

"Sandringham Count," a truly grand-looking, rough coated St. Bernard, presented to the Princess by Mr. George Lawson. He is three years old in July next, and is of a most affectionate disposition, nearly knocking down the anything but weak "Brunsdon" with the exuberance of his caresses when brought into the paddock for exhibition. The playfulness of a pet who weighs over thirteen stone is rather embarrassing. But, in spite of his size and spirits, the "Count" is particularly obedient, and at once trots contentedly to his particular kennel as soon as told that he is finished with. I may as well mention here an instance of peculiar sagacity on the part of all the Royal dogs. Although every kennel in the long range is exactly alike in appearance, and the dogs are lodged with each other according to disposition, and not breed, still, on their return from play or exercise, each dog at once goes straight to its own proper kennel without any directions whatever.

"SNOWDROP."

While I am noticing a kennel of five or six very fine Scotch deerhounds (who, unlike the other dogs, seem to object strongly to the presence of a stranger), there is fetched for inspection a lovely pure white collie named "Snowdrop," who, I am sorry to hear, suffers slightly from rheumatism, although otherwise he is in high condition, and, like nearly all the dogs, most courteous to visitors, at once holding out his paw to be shaken. The well-named "Snowdrop," who is all pure white as to coat, and a fine old-fashioned collie shape, was bred by Lady Georgiana Vernon, and purchased by the Prince at Birmingham Show when a small puppy. He is now about eight years old, and is the special charge of Mrs. Jackson, wife of the Prince's head-keeper, with

whom we also find "Tiny," a funny little curly jet-black Spitz. "Tiny," who was bred here, is descended from "Tottie" (now dead), imported by His Royal Highness from Germany. She, like "Blackie," is very mercurial in her disposition, and objects to have her likeness taken without Mrs. Jackson, to whom she is particularly attached.

Now time presses, and as we are overdue at the stables, further mention of individual dogs must be omitted, although there are still so many meriting notice, notably a beautiful meek-faced young black and tan collie who follows us about, and seizes every opportunity to lick our hands, a host of eager, busy, noisy fox terriers, both rough and smooth, dachshunds, spaniels of various breeds, &c., &c. In fact, a day might well be spent without noticing the absence of time in this happy playground.

I may mention before concluding this short description that the Duchess of Fife's favourite dogs are Blenheim spaniels and dachshunds, and the Princess Maude favours fox terriers. Princess Victoria's dear little "Blackie" we have already been introduced to.

The Duke of York also takes great interest in the Kennels, and is especially partial to the sporting dogs.

And now concerning the Kennels themselves. These are one of the chief show places at Sandringham, and have been exhibited with proper pride in themselves and their inmates for many years past to the numerous guests of their Royal owners. Her Majesty the Queen is, in common with all her family, a great lover of dogs, and on her last visit to Norfolk was one of the keenest critics and admirers of the Kennels and their occupants, enquiring into and noticing the minutest details of their management.

A short space must suffice to mention the store rooms, with their admirably kept fire appliances, &c., the kennels used for working dogs, a distemper house, and a hospital, at present happily empty. Opening from the same yard as these is a large, well-fitted cooking house, with all its necessary fittings, in a truly wonderful state of cleanliness.

The foods used are biscuits, oatmeal, and bullocks' and sheep's heads, all properly cooked and prepared. The range of brick and iron-built kennels consists of fourteen; each has a yard sixteen feet by eleven in front, with properly tiled floor. The arrangement of these can be seen in the picture of the rough bassets, who are represented in their own yard. A constant supply of pure water dripping into large metal vessels is a notable feature. The surplus runs away in a drain at the side of each kennel. This

drain is, of course, very useful when the kennel is washed out, a matter from appearances of very frequent occurrence.

The big dogs, to the number of about thirty, are taken out every morning for exercise, and their kennels cleaned in their absence. On their return the smaller ones go through the same routine. Many other sporting dogs are, of course, kept at the outlying keepers' cottages.

The dogs are given a light meal on their return from exercise, and the heavy one before kenneling up for the night.

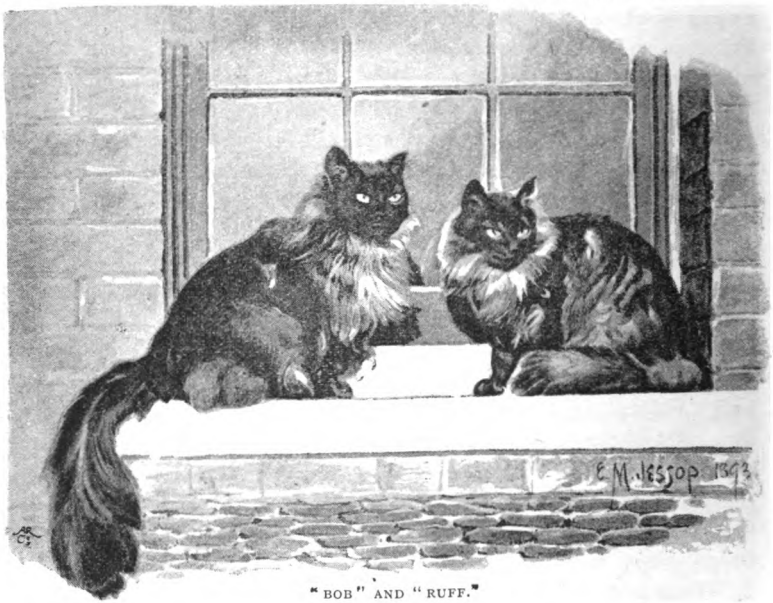
Before leaving we visit the keeper's pretty cottage, and notice, among many other trophies, a splendid pair of stuffed storks, who, in life, were counted among the pets on the estate. Then, as Pepys would say, to a cosy little room, sometimes visited by the Princess. Here are wonderfully-polished collars, leads, &c., also many photographs of deceased favourites, intermingled with autograph portraits of the well-loved masters and mistresses. Here is also to be seen the perfectly-kept stud-book, by which any dog's pedigree can be instantly traced, and the innumerable certificates of the prizes won by their Royal Highnesses' dogs.

Away now, over the velvety turf paddocks, to the back of the kennels, to notice in the pretty ivy-clad wall a small, neat white slab to the memory of poor "Beatie," for years the Prince's pet and companion of his walks. Nearly opposite to this is the site of the former bear-pit, which has been filled up for the last three years, and now has a Lawsoniana tree planted in its centre. "Charlie" and "Polly," the two black bears, its former occupants, lived here for about fifteen years, and as they had to be washed every day, occasionally gave a considerable amount of trouble. Before cleaning the pit its occupants had to be decoyed into a den at the side. This was a fairly easy task with "Polly," but "Charlie" would sometimes take a walk round of an hour or two's duration before going in. Occasionally stopping in his perambulations, he would smile a sort of cynical smile at Brunsdon's efforts to shorten his day's work.

Over the trim lawns once more we go to Mr. Jackson's hospitable house, to notice the many tokens of esteem and reminiscences of successful sporting trips presented by a generous master to a faithful servant.

And then a five minutes' walk, through dense masses of magnificent shrubs and trees, takes us to the stables. We enter from the garden, a nearly square courtyard, with a clock tower at the farther end, flanked on either side with ranges of neat buildings faced with the ever-present "Carr" stone. This, it may be as well to explain, is a kind of reddish-brown ironstone,

chipped into pieces about five inches by two, and inserted, brick fashion, into a backing of mortar laid over the brick buildings. It seems peculiar to this part of the country, and has a very good effect, besides being an excellent preservative, and making a most picturesque background for foliage. Here, in the beautifully neat courtyard, the first pets to welcome us, with shy, but friendly, faces, are "Bob," "Jack," and "Ruff," three remarkably large, handsome, long-haired cats, seemingly of the Angora breed. Their colour is brownish-black, with an occasional mixture of dark tan in their splendid ruff and tails. They are great pets of the Princess's, and were bred here from parents purchased by the Princess at one of the numerous bazaars of which she has been patroness.



"BOB" AND "RUFF."

They are rather shy with strangers, but when comfortably seated in a sunny window "Bob" and "Ruff" do not object to have their portraits taken. "Jack" looks on quietly but disdainfully at such frivolous matters, and mentally murmurs, "Ah! if it were a matter of mice one could take an interest in it."

Now arrives Westover, head coachman to the Prince, and surely looking the character to perfection. Clean shaven, of middle height, and calm, quiet, respectful manners, it is easy to see that this is a man to trust with such a responsibility as he possesses. The able manner in which he afterwards takes the Hungarian horses and the Princess's ponies for a short turn round

the grounds confirms the opinion, and proves him to be a master of his art. In incredibly short time, to the Moray waggonette is first harnessed the four-horse team of Hungarian horses in their national harness. Westover and Pugh, the Princess's own phaeton boy, in natty black liveries, take their places, and the team is trotted out for inspection. Certainly, as pretty a picture with such surroundings as one could see on a summer's day. The Hungarians are the only team of the kind in England, and were purchased in Hungary by Lord Suffield for His Royal Highness. They average 15 hands 2 inches in height, are perfectly matched,

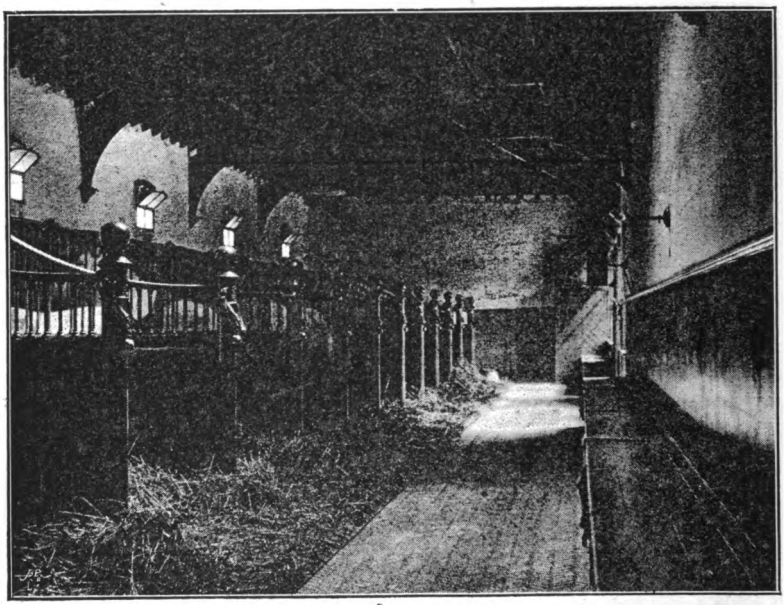
THE PRINCESS'S TEAM.

of a dark bay colour, and as they trot slowly by have, with their somewhat slight build, a very blood-like appearance. They step rather low, with a curiously deer-like action. The harness is very light, but wonderfully strong and well made. It is black in colour, with bright crimson cloth tags and black leather fringe tassels at intervals, which against the dark coats gives a very smart appearance.

The horses' names are "Bātor," "Balās," "Csillag," and "Julcsa." Next to these follow, to my mind, the gems of the stables; they are the Princess's own four favourite ponies, "Bena," "Huffy," "Beau," and "Belle," harnessed to the

pony drag. They are exceedingly handsome, spirited little fellows, about an average of thirteen hands in height, and of a bright bay colour. They are also driven singly and in tandem by Her Royal Highness. Certainly, as standing in the shimmering sunshine, the handsome little fellows pretend to rear and toss their pretty heads with pleasure, they look in every way worthy even of their high position. Pugh, whose special care they are, evidently takes great pride in his charge, and it must be admitted they look groomed to perfection.

I give a portrait of "Huffy," who is the particular favourite of the team, and is constantly driven about the grounds by the Princess. He is eighteen years of age, but seems full of life and spirit.



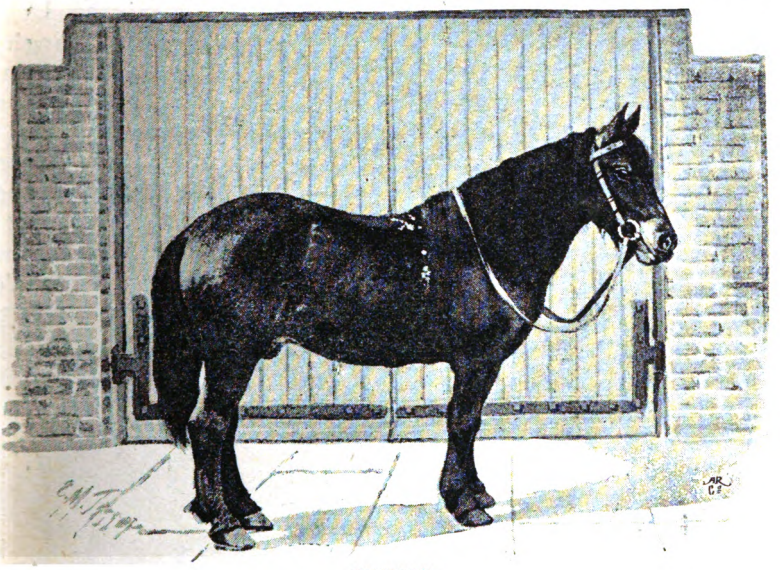
THE STABLES.

In the long fourteen-stall stable on the right of the courtyard live, in addition to the Hungarians, some very smart greys, as well as other horses. This stable, in fact, is always full. On this, the harness side, as it is called, there are at present thirty-two horses, all looking in the perfection of condition.

Now we come to the Princess's own four-stall pony stable, a perfect gem of its kind. It is about twenty feet square, and has all the ironwork painted a dark chocolate colour, with silver-plated mounts. The walls are lined with white, relieved by celadon

green glazed bricks. They are finished at the top by a neat green tile frieze and an open-timbered roof. The pillars between the stalls are of a dark chocolate colour, with burnished silver-plated caps, and the pillar-rims which they support are white, with silvered mounts. The ponies' names are all lettered in gold on neat iron tablets painted with the Royal colours, red and dark blue. The floor is composed of small hard bricks, and has its straw litter carefully finished at the edge with a plaited fringe. The general appearance could not be improved upon for neatness and good taste.

For the present we now leave the harness side and cross to the left, or saddle, side, with the view of making the acquaintance of Copeland, His Royal Highness's pad groom. Copeland is

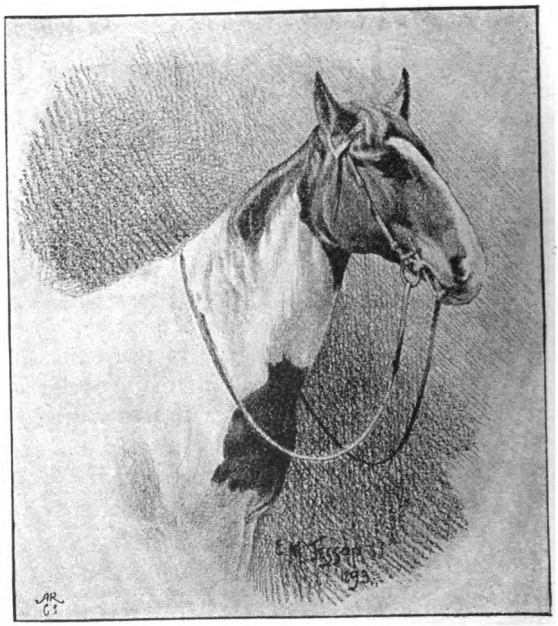


"CALIBAN."

almost the oldest servant on the estate, his career extending over thirty-four years—right back to the Prince's University days, of which he has some most interesting memories. He is small, slight, and spare of figure, with a very marked countenance and a most retentive memory. Copeland, in spite of his long service, still looks very smart when in livery, and is exceptionally attached to His Royal Highness and family, showing with great pride the scarfpin he is now wearing, a pretty present from H.R.H. the Duchess of Fife, given on the eve of her marriage. He enjoys a joke, and I was happy enough to secure his portrait when enjoying one. Copeland shows me, among many other beauties, "Caliban,"

"WASP."

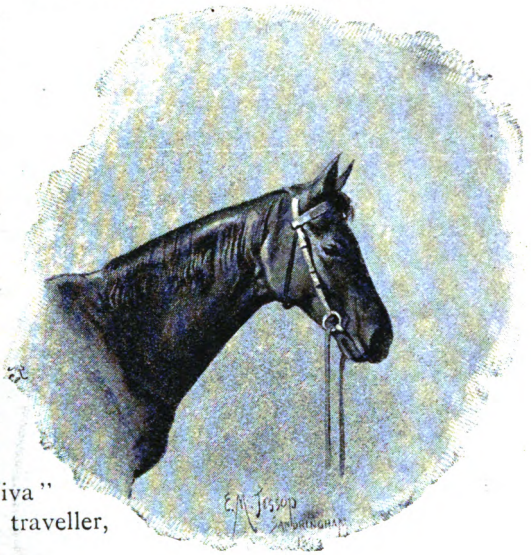
hunter, a dark bay with a white near hind leg. Then follow "Toynbee," the Princess Maude's hunter, a fine bay mare with black points and two white hind heels; "Wasp," Princess Victoria's bay hack with near white hind heel, a finely-shaped horse with a very intelligent expression; and "Kinsky," a striking foreign-looking skewbald hack of charming manners, which the Prince's shooting pony, a sturdy, thick-set bay, with black mane and tail, in appearance something like a mammoth Shetland. He is about fourteen hands high and seven years old. His pedigree is unknown here, but he is a recent present from H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh; "Marky," the Princess's park hack, a beautiful chestnut with a white star on his forehead, and about 41.3 in height; and "Nigel," the Princess Victoria's



"KINSKY."

is frequently ridden by both the Prince and Princess. "Kinsky" is rather long in the legs, and possesses a marked Roman nose of aristocratic appearance. His native country is Hungary.

Special notice must be taken of "Viva," the particular pet of the Princess. "Viva," a very handsome bay mare, 15.2 in height, is no less than twenty-one years of age, although time has seemingly passed very lightly over her pretty head. This is in all probability due to the thoughtful care of the Royal mistress, who has ridden her for the past sixteen years. "Viva" has been a great traveller,



"VIVA."

"VIVANDIÈRE."

having made many continental journeys; among other notable excursions may be mentioned that to France on the occasion of the wedding of H.R.H. the Duc d'Aumale. She invariably accompanies the Princess to Ascot, Goodwood, and the other race meetings which Her Royal Highness graces with her presence. "Viva" still looks in the best of

health and condition, and is in every way worthy of her high trust. Special mention must be made of her small and blood-like head. Although the sight of the last pet shown me at the stables recalls the saddest of memories, I do not think that a short notice should be omitted of "Vivandière," a handsome bright bay pony, of about fourteen hands high, which was the special favourite of the late Duke of Clarence.

In connection with the stables, I may mention that His Royal Highness also owns a small stud of thoroughbred horses for breeding purposes, but at this time they are mostly away on visits to notable sires. The saddle side contains altogether stalls for twenty-six horses.

Having now finished with the horses attached to the house, I come to the museum of the stables. This unique apartment is known as the saddle-room, and is literally crowded with objects of interest. The room itself is rather low roofed, and about twenty-four feet square, its floor covered with oilcloth of a neat matted pattern. The walls are of grained match boarding, and support on three sides six ranges of red painted saddle pegs, of which there are six in each range; bridles, stirrups, hunting trophies, &c., fill in the intervals between the saddles. The fourth wall from a height of three feet from the floor is literally covered with pictures and drawings of the utmost interest. More especially to be noticed are—an oil painting of the Princess's favourite chestnut mare "Victoria," painted by Duvall in 1884. This mare was presented to the Princess by Her Majesty the Queen. She was ridden by the Princess for many years, and died in 1890. The companion pictures in oil are "Castanet," another old pet, also dead, and "Paddy," the Prince's hunter, who, as the frame informs us, was foaled in 1858, and died in 1882. He was a special favourite, and is now buried at the Prince's stables, Cumberland Lodge, Windsor. Above these is an engraving of the Princess on "Viva," accompanied by the pet Chinese dogs before alluded to.

Variously arranged on the wall are—a black and white drawing of Archer, on "Ormonde," by Nightingale; another by Williams of two Arabs and a curiously small pony, brought from India by the Prince, and shown at Islington in 1876; and fine photographs of F. Archer, John Porter, and Mat Dawson. Then follow a very old print of "Orville," a coloured one of "Zoedone," winner of the Grand National in 1883, and another with the inscription, "Kempton Jubilee Stakes, Bendigo wins!" There

are many others of almost equal interest had I space to enumerate them.

Arranged on a narrow shelf below the pictures are twenty-two mounted hoofs of deceased favourites, all with their names legibly printed thereon. Still lower hang a number of old bits of Indian workmanship, beautiful as specimens of handicraft and design, but most cruel when one considers the purpose for which they were intended.

Behind the door in one corner of the room may be seen a splendid Mexican saddle, bridle, stirrups, lasso, and formidable looking spurs, all heavily mounted in silver of the most exquisite workmanship. Here is also a finely-made Australian buck-jumper's saddle, with beautiful designs embossed on its leather, a present, like the Mexican outfit, to His Royal Highness.

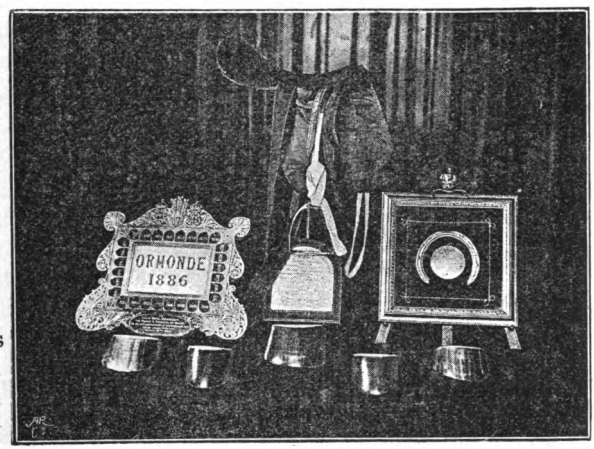
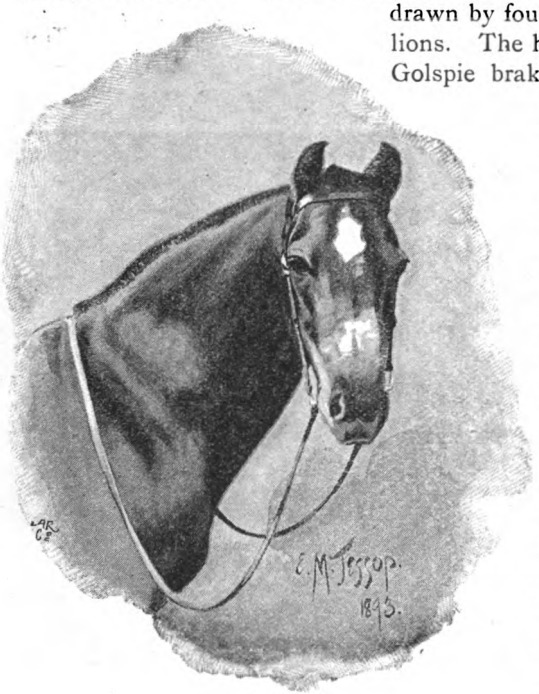


TABLE IN SADDLE ROOM.

The gems of the collection are arranged on a circular oak table facing the door, and consist first of the favourite saddle of the late Fred Archer. Singularly small and light to look at, and showing signs of much wear, is this relic. It is accompanied by a dainty little girth and surcingle, in the Prince's racing colours of blue and scarlet. Next on the right comes one of the plates or shoes of "Ormonde," worn by him, as the inscription in the centre states, when he won the Two Thousand, Derby, and St. Leger in 1886. This has been gilded and is enclosed in a gilt frame. Then on the left is a splendidly wrought silver frame, surmounted by the Prince's crest, with the monograms of the Prince and Princess on either side. The centre of the frame contains a white velvet tablet, with the name "Ormonde," inlaid in letters woven from the great horse's hair. The edges of the letters are again of silver. The border is ornamented by thirty-three small recesses

in the silver frame. Each of these contains a plaited piece of a celebrated winner's hair, with the name of the horse from which it was cut in raised silver letters beneath. This really beautiful piece of work was presented to their Royal Highnesses by Mr. John Porter on the occasion of their silver wedding. Finally, in front of these trophies, stand more mounted hoofs of old favourites. Small wonder is it that this saddle-room is a popular lounge with male guests for smoking and chatting after dinner.

And now concerning the coach-houses. Here, among notable carriages first to claim attention, is a handsome French *char-à-banc*, purchased from the late Emperor Napoleon. This holds nine persons, and is used for going to meets. It is invariably drawn by four horses with postillions. The handsome lightwood Golspie brake for shooting purposes, which has seating accommodation for twelve, is also drawn by a team of four with postillions. The next that I notice is a memorable little carriage, namely, the Princess's own pony cart, which is known as the "Blues' Cart" on account of its cushions, etc., being made of the Guards' colours, blue with red cordings. The cart itself has a body of a rich light oak colour, with red wheels, and springs picked out in blue. It has been used by the Princess for the last twenty-five years, and is usually drawn by "Huffy," who, with the cart, and, above all, his Royal mistress, is a most welcome and constant visitor to all cottages on the estate where sickness or sorrow exist.



"HUFFY."

The tandem is a very smart "Ralli" car of basket work, coloured brown, with bright brass mounts. Near by is the "Suffield" phaeton, lately built for the Prince, and a new 'bus of light-coloured wood, upholstered in blue cloth, and fitted, among other novelties, with the electric light. This is used for church and station work. Then, among other curios, I find four handsome sledges, a curious Canadian carriole, and a funny little hooded phaeton used by the Prince when a boy, and since then by his children, but now having a well-earned rest. Lastly to be remarked in the crowd of beautiful vehicles is a tiny miniature phaeton used by the Royal children when young. This was formerly drawn by the tiny Indian pony whose portrait hangs in the saddle-room; and, most curious of all, a Japanese jinricksha of beautiful lacquer work with brass mounts. I must not forget to mention the neat harness-room, with its brilliantly polished contents, or the well-kept farrier's forge, although space does not allow of a description of either.

One need hardly say that, with such a lover of neatness and order as His Royal Highness, every part of the stables and their contents is a model of cleanliness. Look, for instance, at the very buckets and barrows, all painted white inside, and dark blue without, with black ironwork, and the three well-known white plumes on each article.

The Princess also takes at least as much interest in the stables and their inmates as her Royal consort. Every horse seems to know and love her. It is her kindly habit to constantly visit each stall and feed its occupant with her own hand from a basket of carrots or similar dainties carried by an attendant. And a pretty sight it is to see the long rows of horses turning their heads at the sound of her voice in anticipation of their accustomed tit-bit. Much do I hear also of the Queen's interest in these model stables during her visits here. One circumstance, for instance, seems always fresh in the attendants' memories. This is, that when the Prince lay for so long a time at death's door, a stable lad, stricken by the same dread complaint at the stables, was visited every day by Her Majesty, until, unfortunately, death put an end to his sufferings. In the midst of her own sad trouble she forgot not the poor and the lowly. Such things dwell long in men's minds.

(To be continued.)

The King of Schnorrers.

By I. Zangwill.

Illustrations by G. Hutchinson.

I.

Shewing how the wicked philanthropist was turned into a fish-porter.

IN the days when Lord George Gordon became a Jew, and was suspected of insanity; when, out of respect for the prophecies, England denied her Jews every civic right except that of paying taxes; when the *Gentleman's Magazine* had ill words for the infidel alien; when Jewish marriages were invalid and bequests for Hebrew colleges void; when a prophet prophesying Primrose Day would have been set in the stocks, though Pitt inclined his private ear to Benjamin Goldsmid's views on the foreign loans—in those days, when Tevele Schiff was Rabbi in Israel, and Dr. de Falk, the Master of the Tetragrammaton, saint and Cabbalistic conjuror, flourished in Wellclose Square, and the composer of "The Death of Nelson" was a choir-boy in the Great Synagogue, Joseph Grobstock, pillar of the same, emerged one afternoon into the spring sunshine at the fag-end of the departing stream of worshippers. In his hand was a large canvas bag, and in his eye a twinkle.

There had been a special service of prayer and thanksgiving for the happy restoration of his Majesty's health, and the cantor had interceded tunefully with Providence on behalf of Royal George and "our most amiable Queen, Charlotte." The congregation was large and fashionable—far more so than when only a heavenly sovereign was concerned—and so the courtyard was thronged with a string of *Schnorrers* (beggars), awaiting the exit of the audience, much as the portico of the opera-house is lined by footmen.

They were a motley crew, with tangled beards and long hair that fell in curls, if not the curls of the period; but the gaberdines of the German Ghettoes had been in most cases exchanged for the knee-breeches and many-buttoned jacket of the Londoner. When the clothes one has brought from the Continent wear out, one must needs adopt the attire of one's superiors, or be reduced to buying.

Many bore staves, and had their loins girded up with coloured handkerchiefs, as though ready at any moment to return from the Captivity. Their woebegone air was achieved almost entirely by not washing—it owed little to nature, to adventitious aids in the shape of deformities. The merest sprinkling boasted of physical afflictions, and none exposed sores like the lazars of Italy or contortions like the cripples of Constantinople. Such crude methods are eschewed in the fine art of *schnorring*. A green shade might denote weakness of sight, but the stone-blind man bore no braggart placard—his infirmity was an old established concern well known to the public, and conferring upon the proprietor a definite status in the community. He was no anonymous atom, such as drifts blindly through Christendom, vagrant and apolo-

"DIPPED HIS HAND INTO THE BAG."

getic. Rarest of all sights in this pageantry of Jewish pauperdom was the hollow trouser-leg or the empty sleeve, or the wooden limb fulfilling either and pushing out a proclamatory peg.

When the pack of *Schnorrers* caught sight of Joseph Grobstock, they fell upon him full-cry, blessing him. He, nothing surprised, brushed pompously through the benedictions, though the twinkle in his eye became a roguish gleam. Outside the iron gates, where the throng was thickest, and where some elegant chariots that had brought worshippers from distant Hackney were preparing to start, he came to a standstill, surrounded by clamouring *Schnorrers*, and dipped his hand slowly and ceremoniously

into the bag. There was a moment of breathless expectation among the beggars, and Joseph Grobstock had a moment of exquisite consciousness of importance, as he stood there swelling in the sunshine. There was no middle-class to speak of in the eighteenth-century Jewry; the world was divided into rich and poor, and the rich were very, very rich, and the poor very, very poor, so that everyone knew his station. Joseph Grobstock was satisfied with that in which it had pleased God to place him. He was a jovial, heavy-jowled creature, whose clean-shaven chin was doubling, and he was habited like a person of the first respectability in a beautiful blue body-coat with a row of big yellow buttons. The frilled shirt front, high collar, and copious white neckerchief showed off the massive fleshiness of the red throat. His hat was of the Quaker pattern, and his head did not fail of the periwig and the pigtail, the latter being heretical in name only.

What Joseph Grobstock drew from the bag was a small white-paper packet, and his sense of humour led him to place it in the hand furthest from his nose; for it was a broad humour, not a subtle. It enabled him to extract pleasure from seeing a fellow-mortal's hat rollick in the wind, but did little to alleviate the chase for his own. His jokes clapped you on the back, they did not tickle delicately.

Such was the man who now became the complacent cynosure of all eyes, even of those that had no appeal in them, as soon as the principle of his eleemosynary operations had broken on the crowd. The first *Schnorrer*, feverishly tearing open his package, had found a florin, and, as by electricity, all except the blind beggar were aware that Joseph Grobstock was distributing florins. The distributor partook of the general consciousness, and his lips twitched. Silently he dipped again into the bag, and, selecting the hand nearest, put a second white package into it. A wave of joy brightened the grimy face, to change instantly to one of horror.

"You have made a mistake—you have given me a penny!" cried the beggar.

"Keep it for your honesty,' replied Joseph Grobstock imperturbably, and affected not to enjoy the laughter of the rest. The third mendicant ceased laughing when he discovered that fold on fold of paper sheltered a tiny sixpence. It was now obvious that the great man was distributing prize-packets, and the excitement of the piebald crowd grew momently. Grobstock went on dipping, lynx-eyed against second applications. One

of the few pieces of gold in the lucky-bag fell to the solitary lame man, who danced in his joy on his sound leg, while the poor blind man pocketed his halfpenny, unconscious of ill-fortune, and merely wondering why the coin came swathed in paper.

By this time Grobstock could control his face no longer, and the last episodes of the lottery were played to the accompaniment of a broad grin. Keen and complex was his enjoyment. There was not only the general surprise at this novel feat of alms; there were the special surprises of detail written on face after face, as it flashed or fell or frowned in congruity with the contents of the envelope, and for undercurrent a delicious hubbub of interjections and benedictions, a stretching and withdrawing of palms, and a swift shifting of figures, that made the scene a farrago of excitements. So that the broad grin was one of gratification as well as of amusement, and part of the gratification sprang from a real kindliness of heart—for Grobstock was an easy-going man with whom the world had gone easy. The *Schnorrers* were exhausted before the packets, but the philanthropist was in no anxiety to be rid of the remnant. Closing the mouth of the considerably lightened bag and clutching it tightly by the throat, and recomposing his face to gravity, he moved slowly down the street like a stately treasure-ship flecked by the sunlight. His way led towards Goodman's Fields, where his mansion was situate, and he knew that the fine weather would bring out *Schnorrers* enough. And, indeed, he had not gone many paces before he met a figure he did not remember having seen before.

Leaning against a post at the head of the narrow passage which led to Bevis Marks was a tall, black-bearded, turbaned personage, a first glance at whom showed him of the true tribe. Mechanically Joseph Grobstock's hand went to the lucky-bag, and he drew out a neatly-folded packet and tendered it to the stranger.

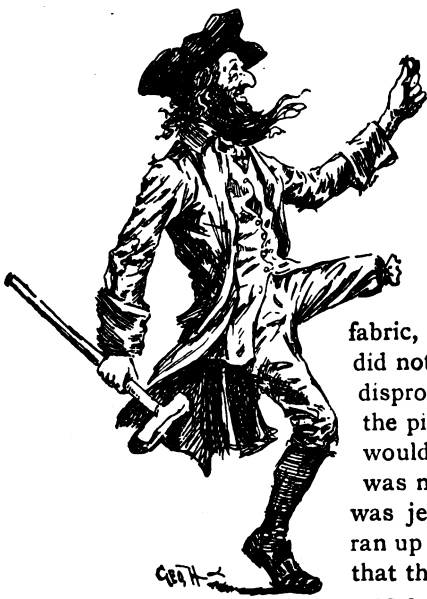
The stranger received the gift graciously, and opened it gravely, the philanthropist loitering awkwardly to mark the issue. Suddenly the dark face became a thunder-cloud, the eyes flashed lightning.

"An evil spirit in your ancestors' bones!" hissed the stranger from between his flashing teeth. "Did you come here to insult me?"

"Pardon, a thousand pardons!" stammered the magnate, wholly taken aback. "I fancied you were a—a—a—poor man."

"And, therefore, you came to insult me!"

"No, no, I thought to help you," murmured Grobstock, turning from red to scarlet. Was it possible he had foisted his charity upon an undeserving millionaire? No! Through all the clouds of his own confusion and the recipient's anger, the figure of a *Schnorrer* loomed too plain for mistake. None but a *Schnorrer* would wear a home-made turban, issue of a black cap crossed with a white kerchief; none but a *Schnorrer* would unbutton the first nine buttons of his waistcoat, or, if this relaxation were due to the warmth of the weather, counteract it by wearing an over-garment, especially one as heavy as a blanket, with buttons the size of compasses and flaps reaching nearly to his shoe-buckles, even though its length were only congruous with that of his undercoat, which already reached the bottoms of his knee-breeches. Finally, who but a *Schnorrer* would wear this overcoat cloak-wise, with dangling sleeves, full of armless suggestion from a side view? Quite apart from the shabbiness of the snuff-coloured fabric, it was amply evident that the wearer did not dress by rule or measure. Yet the disproportions of his attire did but enhance the picturesqueness of a personality that would be striking even in a bath, though it was not likely to be seen there. The beard was jet black, sweeping and unkempt, and ran up his cheeks to meet the raven hair, so that the vivid face was framed in black; it was a long, tapering face with sanguine lips gleaming at the heart of a black bush; the eyes were large and lambent, set in deep sockets under black arching eyebrows; the nose was long and Coptic; the brow low but broad, with straggling wisps of hair protruding from beneath the turban. His right hand grasped a plain ashen staff.



"DANCED ON HIS SOUND LEG

Worthy Joseph Grobstock found the figure of the mendicant only too impressive; he shrank uneasily before the indignant eyes.

"I meant to help you," he repeated.

"And this is how one helps a brother in Israel?" said the *Schnorrer*, throwing the paper contemptuously into the philan-

thropist's face. It struck him on the bridge of the nose, but impinged so mildly that he felt at once what was the matter. The packet was empty—the *Schnorrer* had drawn a blank; the only one the good-natured man had put into the bag.

The *Schnorrer's* audacity sobered Joseph Grobstock completely; it might have angered him to chastise the fellow, but it did not. His better nature prevailed; he began to feel shamefaced, fumbled sheepishly in his pocket for a crown; then hesitated, as fearing this peace-offering would not altogether suffice with so rare a spirit, and that he owed the stranger more than silver—an apology to wit. He proceeded honestly to pay it, but with a maladroit manner, as one unaccustomed to the currency.

"You are an impertinent rascal," he said, "but I daresay you feel hurt. Let me assure you I did not know there was nothing in the packet. I did not, indeed."

"Then your steward has robbed me!" exclaimed the *Schnorrer* excitedly. "You let him make up the packets, and he has stolen my money—the thief, the transgressor, thrice-cursed who robs the poor."

"You don't understand, interrupted the magnate meekly. "I made up the packets myself."

"Then, why do you say you did not know what was in them? Go, you mock my misery!"

"Nay, hear me out!" urged Grobstock desperately. "In some I placed gold, in the greater number silver, in a few copper, in one alone—nothing. That is the one you have drawn. It is your misfortune."

"*My* misfortune!" echoed the *Schnorrer* scornfully. "It is *your* misfortune—I did not even draw it. The Holy One, blessed be He, hath punished you for your heartless jesting with the poor—making a sport for yourself of their misfortunes, even as the Philistines sported with Samson. The good deed you might have put to your account by a gratuity to me, God hath taken from you. He hath declared you unworthy of achieving righteousness through me. Go your way, murderer!"

"Murderer!" repeated the philanthropist, bewildered by this harsh view of his action.

"Yes, murderer! Stands it not in the Talmud that he who shames another is as one who spills his blood? And have you not put me to shame—if anyone had witnessed your almsgiving, would he not have laughed in my beard?"

The pillar of the Synagogue felt as if his paunch were shrinking.

"IT STRUCK HIM ON THE BRIDGE OF THE NOSE."

"But the others—" he murmured deprecatingly. "I have not shed their blood—have I not given freely of my hard-earned gold?"

"For your own diversion," retorted the *Schnorrer* implacably. "But what says the Midrash? There is a wheel rolling in the world—not he who is rich to-day is rich to-morrow, but this one He brings up, and this one He brings down, as is said in the seventy-fifth Psalm. Therefore, lift not up your horn on high, nor speak with a stiff neck."

He towered above the unhappy capitalist, like an ancient prophet denouncing a swollen monarch. The poor man put his hand involuntarily to his high collar as if to explain the source of his apparent arrogance, but in reality because he was not breathing easily under the *Schnorrer's* attack.

"You are an uncharitable man," he panted hotly, driven to a line of defence he had not anticipated. "I did it not from wantonness, but from faith in Heaven. I know well that God sits turning a wheel—therefore I did not presume to turn it myself. Did I not let Providence select who should have the silver and who the gold, who the copper and who the emptiness? Besides, God alone knows who really needs my assistance—I have made Him my almoner. I have cast my burden on the Lord."

"Epicurean!" shrieked the *Schnorrer*. "Blasphemer! Is it thus you would palter with the sacred texts? Do you forget what the next verse says: 'Bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days'? Shame on you—you a *Gabbai* (treasurer) of the Great Synagogue. You see I know you, Joseph Grobstock. Hath not the beadle of your Synagogue boasted to me that you have given him a guinea for brushing your spatterdashes? Would you think of offering *him* a packet? Nay, it is the poor that are trodden on—they whose merits are in excess of those of beadles. But the Lord will find others to take up His loans—for he who hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord. You are no true son of Israel."

The *Schnorrer's* tirade was long enough to allow Grobstock to recover his dignity and his breath.

"If you really knew me, you would know that the Lord is considerably in my debt," he rejoined quietly. "When next you would discuss me, speak with the Psalms-men, not the beadle. Never have I neglected the needy. Even now, though you have been insolent and uncharitable, I am ready to befriend you if you are in want."

"If I am in want!" repeated the *Schnorrer* scornfully. "Is there anything I do not want?"

"You are married?"

"You correct me—wife and children are the only things I do *not* lack."

"No pauper does," quoth Grobstock with a twinkle of restored humour.

"No," assented the *Schnorrer* sternly. "The poor man has the fear of Heaven. He obeys the Law and the Commandments. He marries while he is young—and his spouse is not cursed with barrenness. It is the rich man who transgresses the Judgment, who delays to come under the Canopy."

"Ah! well, here is a guinea—in the name of my wife," broke in Grobstock laughingly. "Or stay—since you do not brush spatterdashes—here is another."

"In the name of my wife," rejoined the *Schnorrer* with dignity, "I thank you."

"Thank me in your own name," said Grobstock. "I mean tell it me."

"I am Manasseh Bueno Barzillai Azevedo da Costa," he answered simply.

"A Sephardi!" exclaimed the philanthropist.

"Is it not written on my face, even as it is written on yours that you are a Tedesco? It is the first time that I have taken gold from one of your lineage."

"Oh, indeed!" murmured Grobstock, beginning to feel small again.

"Yes—are we not far richer than your community? What need have I to take the good deeds away from my own people—they have too few opportunities for beneficence as it is, being so many of them wealthy; brokers and West India merchants, and——"

"But I, too, am a broker, and an East India Director," Grobstock reminded him.

"Maybe; but your community is yet young and struggling—your rich men are as the good men in Sodom for multitude. You are the immigrants of yesterday—refugees from the Ghettoes of Russia and Poland and Germany. But we, as you are aware, have been established here for generations; in the Peninsula our ancestors graced the courts of kings, and controlled the purse-strings of princes; in Holland we held the empery of trade. Ours have been the poets and scholars in Israel. You cannot expect

that we should recognise your rabble, which prejudices us in the eyes of England. We made the name of Jew honourable; you degrade it. You are as the mixed multitude which came up with our forefathers out of Egypt."

"Nonsense!" said Grobstock sharply. "All Israel are brethren."

"Ishmael was the brother of Abraham," answered Manasseh sententiously. "But you will excuse me if I go a-marketing, it is long since I have handled gold." There was a note of wistful pathos in the latter remark which took off the edge of the former, and touched Joseph with compunction for bandying words with a hungry man whose loved ones were probably starving patiently at home.

"Certainly, haste away," he said kindly.

"I shall see you again," said Manasseh with a valedictory wave of his hand, and digging his staff into the cobblestones he journeyed forwards without bestowing a single backward glance upon his benefactor.

Grobstock's road took him to Petticoat Lane in the wake of Manasseh. He had no intention of following him, but did not see why he should change his route for fear of the *Schnorrer*, more especially as Manasseh did not look back. By this time he had become conscious again of the bag he carried, but he had no heart to proceed with the fun. He felt conscience stricken, and had recourse to his pockets instead in his progress through the narrow jostling market-street, where he scarcely ever bought anything personally save fish and good deeds. He was a connoisseur in both. To-day he picked up many a good deed cheap, paying pennies for articles he did not take away—shoe-latchets and cane-strings, barley-sugar and butter-cakes. Suddenly, through a chink in an opaque mass of human beings, he caught sight of a small attractive salmon on a fishmonger's slab. His eye glittered, his chops watered. He elbowed his way to the vendor, whose eye caught a corresponding gleam, and whose finger went to his hat in respectful greeting.

"Good afternoon, Jonathan," said Grobstock jovially, "I'll take that salmon there—how much?"

'Pardon me," said a voice in the crowd, "I am just bargaining for it."

Grobstock started. It was the voice of Manasseh.

"Stop that nonsense, da Costa," responded the fishmonger. "You know you can't give me my price. It is the only one I

have left," he added, half for the benefit of Grobstock. "I couldn't let it go under a couple of guineas."

"Here's your money," cried Manasseh with passionate contempt, and sent two golden coins spinning musically upon the slab.

In the crowd sensation, in Grobstock's breast astonishment, indignation, and bitterness. He was struck momentarily dumb.

"YOU ROGUE! HOW DARE YOU BUY SALMON!"

His face purpled. The scales of the salmon shone like a celestial vision that was fading from him by his own stupidity.

"I'll take that salmon, Jonathan," he repeated, spluttering. "Three guineas."

"Pardon me," repeated Manasseh, "it is too late. This is not an auction." He seized the fish by the tail.

Grobstock turned upon him, goaded to the point of apoplexy. "You!" he cried. "You—you—rogue! How dare you buy salmon!"

"Rogue yourself!" retorted Manasseh. "Would you have me steal salmon?"

"You have stolen my money, knave, rascal!"

"Murderer! Shedder of blood! Did you not give me the money as a free-will offering, for the good of your wife's soul? I call on you before all these witnesses to confess yourself a slanderer!"

"Slanderer, indeed! I repeat, you are a knave and a jackanapes. You—a pauper—a beggar—with a wife and children. How can you have the face to go and spend two guineas—two whole guineas—all you have in the world—on a mere luxury like salmon?"

Manasseh elevated his arched eyebrows.

"If I do not buy salmon when I have two guineas," he answered quietly, "when shall I buy salmon? As you say, it is a luxury; very dear. It is only on rare occasions like this that my means run to it." There was a dignified pathos about the rebuke that mollified the magnate. He felt that there was reason in the beggar's point of view—though it was a point to which he would never himself have risen, unaided. But righteous anger still simmered in him; he felt vaguely that there was something to be said in reply, though he also felt that even if he knew what it was, it would have to be said in a lower key to correspond with Manasseh's transition from the high pitch of the opening passages. Not finding the requisite repartee he was silent.

"In the name of my wife," went on Manasseh, swinging the salmon by the tail, "I ask you to clear my good name which you have bespattered in the presence of my very tradesmen. Again I call upon you to confess before these witnesses that you gave me the money yourself in charity. Come! Do you deny it?"

"No, I don't deny it," murmured Grobstock, unable to understand why he appeared to himself like a whipped cur, or how what should have been a boast had been transferred into an apology to a beggar.

"In the name of my wife, I thank you," said Manasseh. "She loves salmon, and fries with unction. And now, since you have no further use for that bag of yours, I will relieve you of its burden by taking my salmon home in it." He took the canvas bag from the limp grasp of the astonished Tedesco, and dropped the fish in. The head protruded, surveying the scene with a cold, glassy, ironical eye.

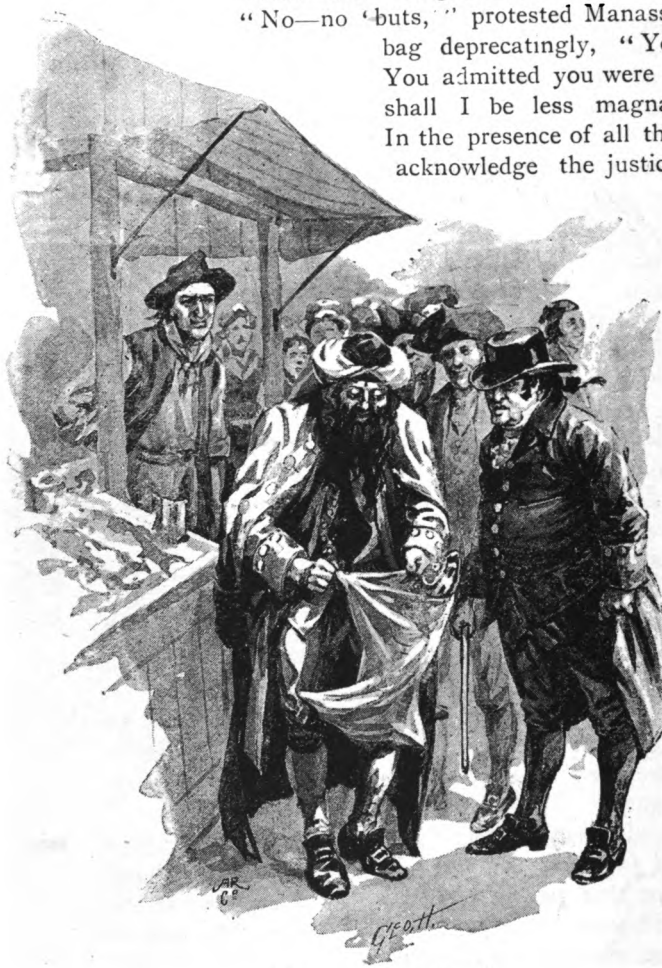
"Good afternoon all," said the *Schnorrer* courteously.

"One moment," called out the philanthropist, when he found his tongue. "The bag is not empty—there are a number of packets still left in it."

"So much the better!" said Manasseh soothingly. "You will be saved from the temptation to continue shedding the blood of the poor, and I shall be saved from spending all your bounty upon salmon—an extravagance you were right to deplore.'

"But—but!' began Grobstock.

"No—no 'buts,'" protested Manasseh, waving his bag deprecatingly, "You were right. You admitted you were wrong before; shall I be less magnanimous now? In the presence of all these witnesses I acknowledge the justice of your rebuke. I ought not to have wasted two guineas on one fish. It was not worth it. Come over here, and I will tell you something." He walked out of earshot of the bystanders, turning down a side alley opposite the stall, and beckoned with his salmon bag. The East India Director had no course but to obey. He would probably have followed him in any case, to have it out with the *Schnorrer*, but now he had a humiliating sense of being at his beck and call.



"THE HEAD PROTRUDED."

"Well, what more have you to say?" he demanded gruffly.

"I wish to save you money in future," said the beggar in low, confidential tones. "That Jonathan is a son of the separation! The salmon is not worth two guineas—no, on my soul! If you had not come up I should have got it for twenty-five shillings. Jonathan stuck on the price when he thought you would buy. I trust you will not let me be the loser by your arrival, and that if I should find less than seventeen shillings in the bag you will make it up to me."

The bewildered broker felt his grievance disappearing as by sleight of hand.

Manasseh added winningly: "I know you are a gentleman, capable of behaving as finely as any Sephardi."

This handsome compliment completed the *Schnorrer's* victory, which was sealed by his saying, "And so I should not like you to have it on your soul that you had done a poor man out of a few shillings."

Grobstock could only remark meekly: "You will find more than seventeen shillings in the bag."

"Ah, why were you born a Tedesco!" cried Manasseh ecstatically. "Do you know what I have a mind to do? To come and be your Sabbath-guest! Yes, I will take supper with you next Friday, and we will welcome the Bride—the holy Sabbath—together! Never before have I sat at the table of a Tedesco—but you—you are a man after my own heart. Your soul is a son of Spain. Next Friday at six—do not forget."

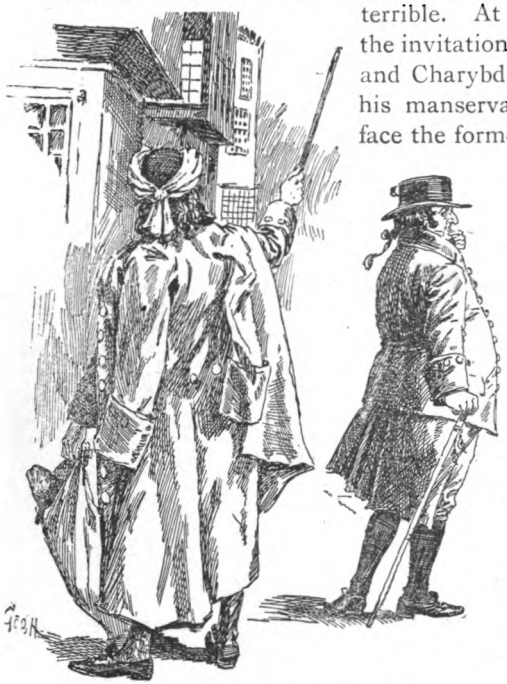
"But—but I do not have Sabbath-guests," faltered Grobstock.

"Not have Sabbath-guests! No, no, I will not believe you are of the sons of Belial, whose table is spread only for the rich, who do not proclaim your equality with the poor even once a week. It is your fine nature that would hide its benefactions. Do not I, Manasseh Bueno Barzillai Azevedo da Costa, have at my Sabbath-table every week Yankele ben Yitzchok—a Pole? And if I have a Tedesco at my table, why should I draw the line there? Why should I not permit you, a Tedesco, to return the hospitality to me, a Sephardi? At six, then! I know your house well—it is an elegant building that does credit to your taste—do not be uneasy—I shall not fail to be punctual. *A Dios!*"

This time he waved his stick fraternally, and stalked down a turning. For an instant Grobstock stood glued to the spot, crushed by a sense of the inevitable. Then a horrible thought occurred to him.

Easy-going man as he was, he might put up with the

visitation of Manasseh. But then he had a wife, and, what was worse, a livery servant. How could he expect a livery servant to tolerate such a guest? He might fly from the town on Friday evening, but that would necessitate troublesome explanations. And Manasseh would come again the next Friday. That was certain. Manasseh would be like grim death—his coming, though it might be postponed, was inevitable. Oh, it was too terrible. At all costs he must revoke the invitation (?). Placed between Scylla and Charybdis, between Manasseh and his manservant, he felt he could sooner face the former.



"WAVED HIS STICK FRATERNALLY."

"Da Costa!" he called in agony. "Da Costa!"

The *Schnorrer* turned, and then Grobstock found he was mistaken in imagining he preferred to face da Costa.

"You called me?" enquired the beggar.

"Ye—e—s," faltered the East India Director, and stood paralysed.

"What can I do for you?" said Manasseh, graciously.

"Would you mind—very much—if I—if I asked you——"

"Not to come," was in his throat, but stuck there.

"If you asked me——" said Manasseh encouragingly.

"To accept some of my clothes," flashed Grobstock with a sudden inspiration. After all, Manasseh was a fine figure of a man. If he could get him to doff those musty garments of his he might almost pass him off as a prince of the blood, foreign by his beard—at any rate he could be certain of making him acceptable to the livery servant. He breathed freely again at this happy solution of the situation.

"Your cast-off clothes?" asked Manasseh. Grobstock was not sure whether the tone was supercilious or eager. He hastened

to explain. "No, not quite that. Second-hand things I am still wearing. My old clothes were already given away at Passover to Simeon the Psalms-man. These are comparatively new."

"Then I would beg you to excuse me," said Manasseh, with a stately wave of the bag.

"Oh, but why not?" murmured Grobstock, his blood running cold again.

"I cannot," said Manasseh, shaking his head.

"But they will just about fit you," pleaded the philanthropist.

"That makes it all the more absurd for you to give them to Simeon the Psalms-man," said Manasseh, sternly. "Still, since he is your clothes-receiver, I could not think of interfering with his office. It is not etiquette. I am surprised you should ask me if I should mind. Of course I should mind—I should mind very much."

"But he is not my clothes-receiver," protested Grobstock. "Last Passover was the first time I gave them to him, because my cousin, Hyam Rosenstein, who used to have them, has died."

"But surely he considers himself your cousin's heir," said Manasseh. "He expects all your old clothes henceforth."

"No. I gave him no such promise."

Manasseh hesitated.

"Well, in that case ——"

"In that case," repeated Grobstock breathlessly.

"On condition that I am to have the appointment permanently, of course."

"Of course," echoed Grobstock eagerly.

"Because you see," Manasseh condescended to explain, "it hurts one's reputation to lose a client."

"Yes, yes, naturally," said Grobstock soothingly. "I quite understand." Then, feeling himself slipping into future embarrassments, he added timidly, "Of course they will not always be so good as the first lot, because ——"

"Say no more," Manasseh interrupted reassuringly, "I will come at once and fetch them."

"No. I will send them," cried Grobstock, horrified afresh.

"I could not dream of permitting it. What! Shall I put you to all that trouble which should rightly be mine? I will go at once—the matter shall be settled without delay, I promise you; as it is written, 'I made haste and delayed not!' Follow me!" Grobstock suppressed a groan. Here had all his manœuvring landed him in a worse plight than ever. He would have to

present Manasseh to the livery servant without even that clean face which might not unreasonably have been expected for the Sabbath. Despite the text quoted by the erudite *Schnorrer*, he strove to put off the evil hour.

"Had you not better take the salmon home to your wife first?" said he.

"My duty is to enable you to complete your good deed at once. My wife is unaware of the salmon. She is in no suspense."

Even as the *Schnorrer* spake, it flashed upon Grobstock that Manasseh was more presentable with the salmon than without it—in fact, that the salmon was the salvation of the situation. When Grobstock bought fish he often hired a man to carry home the spoil. Manasseh would have all the air of such a loafer. Who would suspect that the fish and even the bag belonged to the porter, though purchased with the gentleman's money. Grobstock silently thanked Providence for the ingenious way in which it had contrived to save his self-respect. As a mere fish-carrier Manasseh would attract no second glance from the household; once safely in, it would be comparatively easy to smuggle him out, and when he did come on Friday night it would be in the metamorphosing glories of a body-coat, with his unspeakable undergarment turned into a shirt and his turban knocked into a cocked hat. They emerged into Aldgate, and then turned down Leman Street, a fashionable quarter, and so into Great Prescott Street. At the critical street corner Grobstock's composure began to desert him: he took out his handsomely ornamented snuff-box and administered to himself a mighty pinch. It did him good, and he

"ADMINISTERED A MIGHTY PINCH."

walked on and was well nigh arrived at his own door when Manasseh suddenly caught him by a coat button.

"Stand still a second," he cried imperatively.

"What is it?" murmured Grobstock in alarm.

"You have spilt snuff all down your coat front," Manasseh replied severely. "Hold the bag a moment while I brush it off."

Joseph obeyed, and Manasseh scrupulously removed every particle with such patience that Grobstock's was exhausted.

"Thank you," he said at last, as politely as he could. "That will do."

"No, it will not do," replied Manasseh. "I cannot have my coat spoiled. By the time it comes to me it will be a mass of stains if I don't look after it."

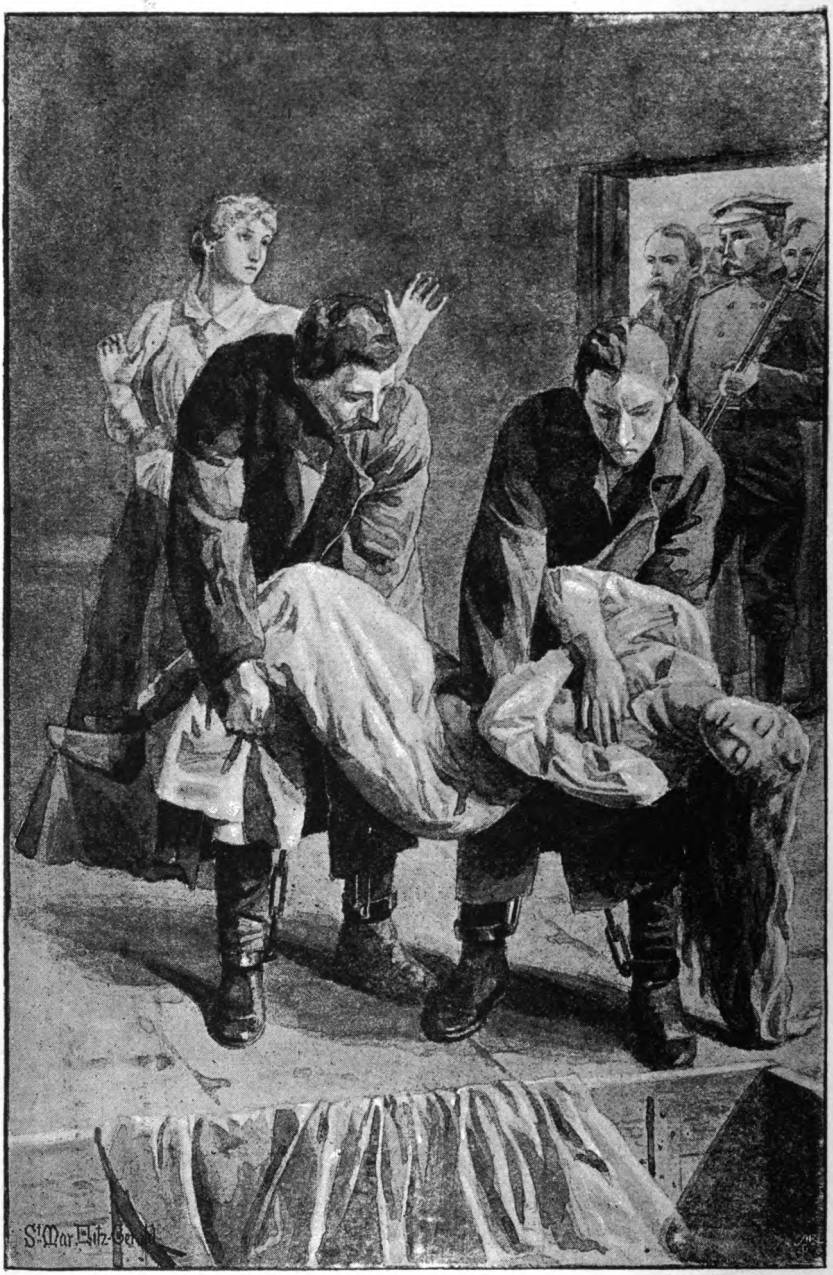
"Oh, is that why you took so much trouble?" said Grobstock, with an uneasy laugh.

"Why else? Do you take me for a beadle, a brusher of gaiters?" enquired Manasseh haughtily. "There now! that is the cleanest I can get it. You would escape these droppings if you held your snuff-box so——" Manasseh gently took the snuff-box and began to explain, walking on a few paces.

"Ah, we are at home!" he cried, breaking off the object-lesson suddenly. He pushed open the gate, ran up the steps of the mansion and knocked thunderously, then snuffed himself magnificently from the bejewelled snuff-box.

Behind came Joseph Grobstock, slouching limply, and carrying Manasseh da Costa's fish.

(To be continued.)



"BEFORE I CAN INTERFERE, THE BODY HAS BEEN PLACED IN THE LONG BOX.'

Memoirs of a Female Nihilist.

By Sophie Wassilieff.

Illustrations by J. St. M. Fitz-Gerald.

IV.—THE ROAD TO EXILE.

YOU will ask me, friends, if I was tried by court-martial? No. After an exchange of documents between St. Petersburg and X——, a proceeding which lasted more than two months, several of us, as well as the Commandant and the soldier who killed Ivanoff, were called before the court-martial—as witnesses. My two comrades having been condemned to hard labour, our case was again taken up, and was only terminated fifteen months later—that is, terminated administratively. This is one of the usual methods of getting rid of political cases. The examinations being once ended, the documents, instead of being sent to a tribunal, are handed over to the Minister of the Interior, who, in conjunction with the chief of the political police, awards the penalties to those inculpated. This method of procedure suppresses all debate, the intervention of counsel, the calling of witnesses; in a word, all that constitutes a guarantee—if only an illusory one—of legality. At the same time, it allows nothing to transpire outside the prisons; renders impossible any of those indiscretions which—in spite of the closed doors at all political trials—inform the public of the proceedings, and make it the arbitrator between judges and accused. For this reason the Russian Government replaces, more and more, the verdicts of tribunals by administrative condemnations, (1) as it formerly replaced public by secret executions; as it has forbidden the newspapers to refer not only to these trials and executions, but also to arrests, searches, &c.

It is a very cold, grey morning in February when Mr. N—— and Col. P—— enter our cells to inform us of the ministerial

(1) Administrative condemnations do not include either the death penalty or hard labour. This tendency to replace the verdicts of tribunals by administrative condemnations, while it aims at cutting short the comments of foreign newspapers, and is the climax of injustice, has still this to be said for it, that it has reduced the severity of the sentences pronounced.

decisions. I am condemned to Siberian exile. Ten days later, I and others who have received similar sentences are taken to the railway station and locked in third-class carriages previous to starting on the journey for one of the prisons in Central Russia. This transfer is premature. Navigation on the Volga will not open for a considerable time. Besides, it will be necessary to wait for

"I AM CONDEMNED TO SIBERIAN EXILE."

condemned prisoners from other towns, who at certain times of the year—or rather of the summer—are sent from different parts of the empire to one of the great "etapes," (2) such as Wichin-Wolotchek or Moscow, where they are formed into large convoys,

(2) Etapes—the name given to the prisons found from stage to stage on the road followed by the exiles going to Siberia.

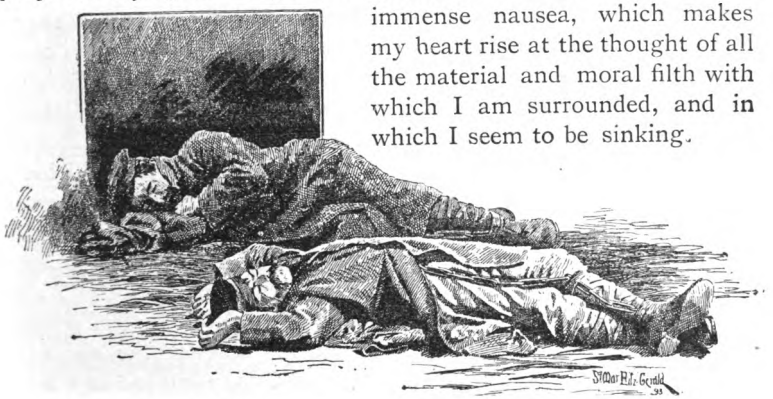
and from which they finally start for exile. As, however, a large number of Nihilists have recently been arrested at X——, and the prison there is crammed, we are hurried away without waiting for the spring, in order to make room for the new arrivals. This premature separation from Aunt Vera causes me great pain, notwithstanding that she promises to come and see me at Moscow, where we are to pass in the course of a few months. Outside of this sorrow I accept with indifference my change of prison. One prison or another, what does it matter? Besides, I am too weak and tired to protest. The circle of my interests has been so long and so strongly restrained, that except a few personal friends and a number of theoretical questions raised by my reading, nothing in the world interests, or can interest or excite me. Nevertheless, as I enter my new prison, I experience a sufficiently strong emotion of repulsion and disgust, and in that feeling I am not alone. At the moment when the warder, wearing the uniform of the Ministry of the Interior (a long frock coat with gilt buttons), opens before us the door of the principal building of the prison, I hear one of the three guards who have accompanied us from X—— mutter, as he expectorates, "What a dirty hole!" Oh, yes. Dirty and dark, and evil-smelling to such a degree, that instinctively I stop on the threshold, and with agony turn my eyes towards the great plain covered with snow, and now hidden from view by the high prison walls.

In traversing the long corridor of which the walls up to half their height are painted black, in order to hide the dirt with which they are covered, I am for several moments in contact with a crowd of civil prisoners waiting outside the door of the Record Office. This contact is only a momentary one, for, on observing "a political," accompanied by guards, one of the *employés* of the Record Office at once sends us into the adjoining room, which is the Director's. My guards, who before their officers are dumb, here, in the presence of civilians, whose duty it is to watch over thieves and assassins, assume airs and graces. And while the Director is being summoned, one of them, turning to the Recorder, asks whether "this hole contains much of this vermin?" while through the half-open door I examine my future co-prisoners. In the semi-obscurity of the corridor, to which the only light admitted comes from a small window, they form a dim group composed of long and shapeless cloaks, with grey heads, of which the hair is cut close to the scalp; with sunken eyes, and flesh so yellow and clay-like, that to me they seem unreal, and might be mistaken

for horrible toys, of which the heads have been cut off and thrust into gigantic and partly-rotted potatoes. The formalities of transfer concluded, the guards retire, and I, with the chief warder, after having mounted a staircase and traversed several corridors filled with soldiers, at last stop before the sombre door of my new dwelling. Political prisoners after their condemnation being subject to the same *régime* as ordinary offenders, I am now no longer in a cellular prison. As the warder opens the door, I see a long, large room, of which the walls, like those of the corridors, are painted half black, half white, and of which the furniture consists of a small table, painted dark green, a long form of the same colour, the regulation water-pitchers, and a great wooden covered bucket, with the use of which latter I am not acquainted. Perceiving my astonishment, the warder informs me that this room is intended to accommodate several prisoners, who sleep on the floor, unless they are noble, and that their condemnation has not deprived them of their privileges. As to the great bucket, it is used by the prisoners for the reception of dirty water, and as a w.c. With a movement of stupefaction and disgust I draw back, but as the warder continues to explain that the distribution of food is long past, that the cells are never lit at night under any pretext, I recognise that any attempt at revolt would be useless, that I am alone here, that the comrades who journeyed with me are in some other corridor, or, perhaps, even in another building. A quarter of an hour later the warder returns, accompanied by two grey shadows of common prisoners, who carry a small iron camp bedstead, a sort of litter, with a mattress, a pillow filled with hay, and a piece of coarse grey cloth to serve as blanket. Taking advantage of the still remaining light, which is in part due to the reflection of the snow, I cover this bed, which has first been made by thieves, with my travelling rug, and, dressed as I am, lie down. It is very cold,

"MUCH OF THIS VERMIN?"

so cold that the next morning I find a thick coating of ice on the water in my pitcher. I am very hungry and frightened; frightened at being alone amongst all these thieves and assassins, although, guarded and watched as they are, political prisoners are in reality exposed to no danger, and this great cell, dimly lighted by the moon's rays, is mournful to a degree which, I think, nothing can equal. All this I feel only vaguely. With my strength and my blood the prison, like an immense sponge, appears to have absorbed all my impressionability, all the vivacity of sentiment proper to my age, leaving me only, for the moment, disgust and an immense nausea, which makes my heart rise at the thought of all the material and moral filth with which I am surrounded, and in which I seem to be sinking.



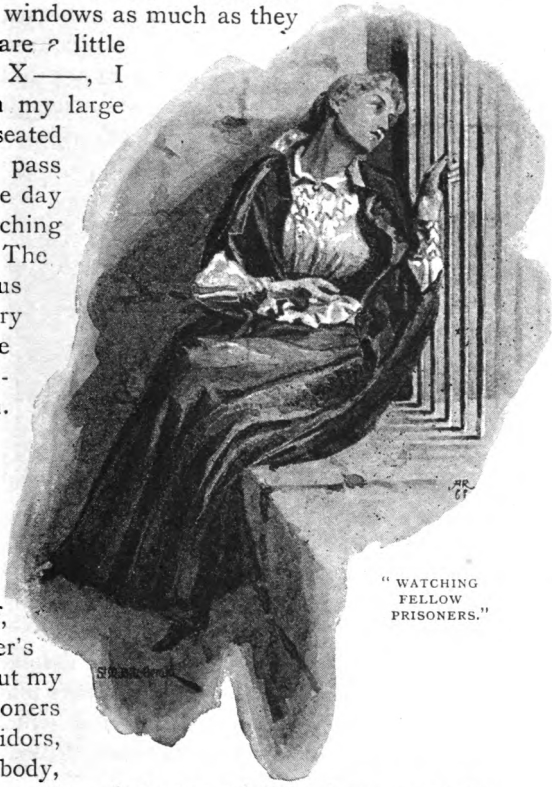
"WHO SLEEP ON THE FLOOR UNLESS THEY ARE NOBLE."

Awakened next morning at daybreak, I receive, half-an-hour later, a pound of rye-bread and a bowl of soup. The bread is black, and in order that it may weigh more it is only partly baked, and in appearance and taste resembles clay soaked in water. As for the soup, it is simply hot water, salted, in which float morsels of rye-bread. At noon, I and the others who are "privileged" receive another bowl of soup, in which float small pieces of almost black meat, so much cooked that it divides in fibres. Those who are not privileged have in the morning a pound-and-a-half of rye-bread, and at noon a bowl of vegetable soup, in which twice each week they find meat similar to ours. This food, prepared and served by thieves who do all the work of the prison, is all that is allowed as the daily rations. For each prisoner the Government, as payment for food, allows 13 kopecks (about 3d.) for those who are noble, and 10 kopecks (2½d.) for those who are not. Apart from the two daily repasts, the day is absolutely

without incident. The Government allows each exile to take only 20 kilogrammes (about 43lbs.) of baggage, and owing to the season and the climate of the country where I am going, my little portmanteau is full of linen and warm clothes. I have with me neither ink nor books; and the prison library contains only the Gospels and the "Lives of Saints." The days are growing longer, but the only time I am occupied is during the few minutes of the regulation promenade, which here, as at X——, takes place in the interior court-yard. It is larger than that at X——, but how much more dirty! In one of the angles of this court-yard, which is closed in on all four sides by great buildings, and about thirty-five feet from my window, is a small wooden construction, of which the boards are rotten and disjointed. It is here that each morning the prisoners empty the large wooden buckets with which each is provided. At the present season the stench arising therefrom is practically confined to the place, but as I look at it from the other end of the court-yard, I ask myself with horror, "What will it be in the summer?" With the exception of the quarter of an hour spent in the court-yard in solitary promenade, my life is reduced to one of almost absolute idleness. But I am so tired, numbed with the cold, and weakened for want of proper food, that this inactivity does not weigh too heavily upon me, and I pass the greater part of my time stretched upon my bed in a sort of half slumber.

At the end of a few weeks of this life—if it be life—a few changes take place. One of our comrades receives from the town where we are imprisoned a letter which concludes with the words, "From your old Aunt," and signed with the same surname as his own. This "old Aunt," whom our comrade does not know and has never heard of, gives him her address in order that he may write for anything he may require. She is a member of the Red Cross Revolutionary Society. Possibly, through our friends at X——, she has learnt that amongst the prisoners is one bearing her name, and she takes advantage of the circumstance in order to enter into communication with the prisoners. From that time every week the "imprisoned nephew" receives cold meats, bread, tea, &c., and in such quantities that there is sufficient for all of us, and my share lasts for several days. Sometimes, the basket of provisions is accompanied by another filled with warm clothes and books, especially books. These books are examined by the director of the prison, and as he has but little time to waste for that purpose, he simply assures himself that they bear the official

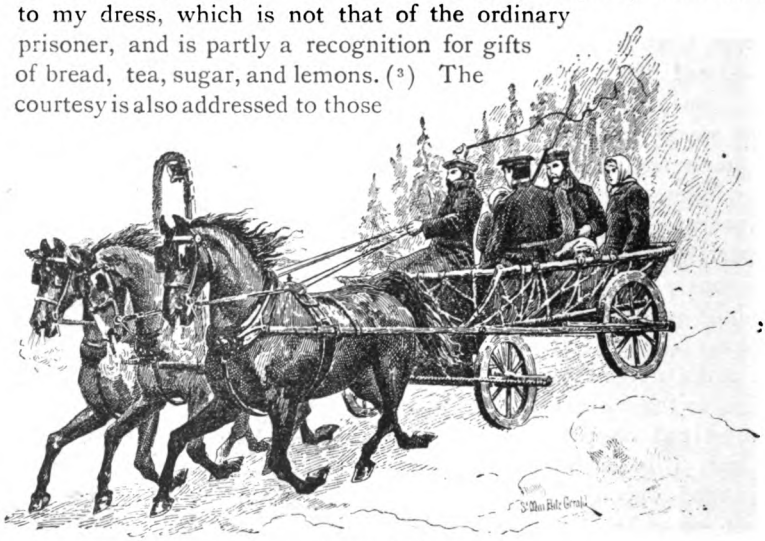
mark of the Censor, and then they are allowed to pass, and when I receive them they bring back a little life into my cell. About the same time the weather begins to grow milder. This, too, has its inconveniences. The walls of the large cell I inhabit have hitherto remained dry, but with the thaw they become moist and damp, and soon my linen, clothes, and bed are soiled and wet with the dirty moisture. This inconvenience is, however, compensated for by a sort of pleasure. Here, prisoners are allowed to open their windows as much as they please, and as they are a little larger than those at X——, I often wrap myself in my large fur-lined cloak, and, seated on the window-sill, pass the warm hours of the day either in reading or watching my fellow-prisoners. The Government keeps us apart from the ordinary prisoners, fearing we might make a propaganda amongst them. Thanks to this separation, to the moral and physical torpor in which I have been plunged during my first weeks here, outside of the old thief, who under the warder's watchful eyes cleans out my cell, and the few prisoners I have met in the corridors, I know absolutely nobody, and have seen but few. Now, from my window, I can see some thirty or forty of them taking their daily exercise in the court-yard, and as the effects of good food and the genial warmth of spring begin to put new life into me, my curiosity awakens, and I begin to observe them.



"WATCHING FELLOW PRISONERS."

Covered by their long grey cloaks, of which some have a red square in the back, thereby indicating that they are convicts, their fantastic heads continually attract my attention. As I see them

in the full light of day, I notice that their faces, heavily lined, show traces of scurvy, that it is impossible to judge their ages, that their lips are bloodless, that a yellow tinge indicates diseased livers, that their voices are so uniformly weak, as though sickness, and misery, and weakness, and the fear of being beaten, which they often are, and the suffocation of these cursed walls, had killed all individuality in them. In passing beneath my window, which is on the first floor, some of these grey shades lift their caps, which are of the same material as their cloaks, and murmur, "A political." This courtesy is partly addressed to my dress, which is not that of the ordinary prisoner, and is partly a recognition for gifts of bread, tea, sugar, and lemons. (3) The courtesy is also addressed to those



"POST HASTE."

who are going into Siberia, "not for themselves but for others," a distinction which the ordinary prisoners make between themselves and political offenders, a distinction which I hear repeated all along the road to Siberia, where we, driven post haste, pass convoys of these ordinary prisoners, into whose yellow eyes comes a vague, stupefied, and respectful look. To see them thus, as two by two they wearily make their round of the court-yard, dragging their poor thin feet, coughing, and complaining of their bleeding gums, with their ghastly faces, I am taken with a profound pity, and forget my old disgust. So one day, when I enter the Director's office and find him beating one of these poor miserable beings, I rush in between them and seize his arm. The action,

(3) The lack of acid in the prison food being a fruitful source of scurvy, prisoners eat lemons with avidity.

as much a surprise for myself as for the others, results in my being punished with three days' solitary confinement. On another occasion, seeing beneath my window a woman receive thirty strokes with a rod, although the directors of prisons have the right to inflict only from three to five, I write to Mr. Golkine Wraskine, president of the Prisons Department, and complain. This method, to which I have frequent recourse, simply results in the Director subjecting me to severe disciplinary penalties, and to the matter being a source of continual discussion between myself and cell companion.

Yes! For some time past, since the commencement of April, I have had a cell companion, Nathalie C——, who, like myself, condemned to exile, is waiting with several comrades the time for commencing the long journey into Siberia. After the first joy of being no longer alone, and the first astonishment at finding another with me to whom I am, so to speak, riveted and cannot separate from for a minute; after some discussion over the stupid sub-division of "privileged" and non-privileged; we fall again into the regular and monotonous life of prisoners; meals and exercise together, reading aloud, and a little needlework or embroidery, for which the materials are supplied by the wife of the Director, who is in the habit of getting her linen and clothes made by the prisoners. Then, in the evenings, long conversations and souvenirs of other days, so that after a fortnight of this life we know each other as well as though we had lived together since childhood. This more particularly applies to me, for my companion, who is ten years my senior, is not quite so expansive as I. Arrested in a village, where she acted as public schoolmistress, Nathalie C—— has been condemned to exile in Eastern Siberia for having made a propaganda amongst the peasantry. Although the police have no proof of this crime, and although their suspicions are only based on the facts that being sufficiently rich to have no need to earn her own livelihood, and having a larger and higher education than is permitted (4) to communal schoolmistresses, she has

(4) The Russian Government forbids anyone possessed of a superior education occupying any post which brings them into direct communication with the people. During a certain period, when the Russian revolutionary party reckoned upon a mass rising of the peasantry, and wished to hasten this rising by propaganda, several young people, after having spent from four to five years in the higher studies, left the Universities without passing the final exams or taking their diplomas, in order not to be considered as having more than an average education, and so being enabled to obtain employment in the villages. This "fraud," which consisted in renouncing not only all hopes of a professional career, but also the pleasures of living in a cultured and intelligent society, or enjoying good books, etc., constitutes in the eyes of the police a strong aggravation of the "crimes" discovered, or even suspected.

buried herself for years in the provinces. During our conversations, Nathalie often speaks of those years spent amongst the peasantry, of their customs and their manner of dealing with certain social and political questions. Of herself she speaks but rarely, perhaps because she has for so long been separated from her family and personal friends, and has lost the habit of talking of personal questions; perhaps, too, because certain episodes of her life are linked with some of those secrets of revolutionary organisations so terrible in their responsibility that they force those who are concerned therein to speak of them only to those who should know, and that only at such times as is absolutely necessary, and as a means to an end. Moreover, reserve is one of Nathalie's characteristic traits, and is reflected even in her manner and on her face of Slavonic type, round, with large grey eyes, a high forehead, and abundant fair hair. She is so pale and worn that she resembles nothing so much as a fine painting on a dull green firescreen, behind which flames are continually playing. Poor Nathalie! So good and so attentive to me and to all the others, and so profoundly indifferent to all that constitutes her prison life; always calm and affable; her image, although indistinct by death and time, ever remains for me one of the purest and dearest I have known.

"OFTEN SPEAKS OF THOSE YEARS SPENT AMONGST THE PEASANTRY."

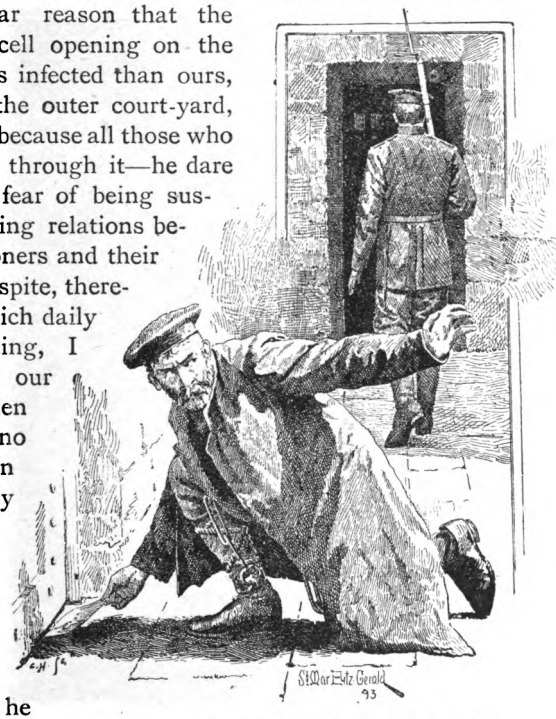
The only question on which we never agreed, and which alone could make Nathalie throw off her impassibility, was the struggle which I continually carried on against the Director on behalf of the common prisoners. Agitated, like myself, at the sight of these unfortunates, revolting as much as I at the treatment to which they were subjected, she held that my anger and complaints to the Director of the Department of Prisons served no good end; that the officers were all alike; that to complain to one of the peccadilloes of another did not tend to ameliorate the position of the prisoners; that if it was desirable to alter the situation, the work must be done thoroughly. I could not but admit that,

theoretically, Nathalie was right, but her theory was impracticable. This Director, who did not hesitate to beat the sick and the women, and, for the sake of the bribes it brought him, allowed the contractors to mix bran and clay with the bread, appeared to me to be an exception, and a monster. Besides, to see others suffer without trying to alleviate or taking up their defence, was more than I could resist. By-and-bye these discussions and my struggle with the Director came to an end. As the month of May advanced, bringing the first heats of summer, the little wooden construction in the angle of the court-yard began to throw out such strong and nauseous odours that we, the prisoners, found ourselves forced to keep our windows closed, and thus the air of the cells was rendered stifling. About this time, too, as it does in spring in nearly all Russian prisons save those of modern construction, typhoid fever broke out. It is a specially virulent form, known to the people as "black," and to the doctors as "exenthematic." This epidemic, which recurs each springtime in different parts of the country, carries off during the summer thousands of victims, not only in the prisons, but amongst the free populations, whose relations with the prisons and prison convoys passing through the country bring them into contact with these hot-beds of contagion. As soon as the first case of fever declares itself, the Director sends his family into the country. We, the political prisoners, apply to both the Director and doctor for precautionary measures. The doctor replies that as he is only allowed 40 roubles (£4) per annum for the medicines for the hospital in which there are 60 beds, nearly always occupied, he is not in a position to supply us with disinfectants, which, besides, would be useless. As to the Director, he refers us to the Governor of the Province and to Mr. Golkine-Wraskine, director of the Prisons Department. Towards the middle of May, we individually write letters—for the Russian law does not admit of collective complaints or demands—pointing out the insanitary condition of the prison, and urging precautionary measures against the epidemic. It is July when I leave the prison, and up to that time no reply has been received, and no preventive measures taken. The opinion of the doctors generally is, that in order to stamp out these hot-beds of fever, improved sanitation is not sufficient, but that at least three-fourths of the prisons should be pulled down, that the interiors of the penitentiaries and "etapes" should be renewed, and that the prison *régime* should be modified. These requirements are well known at St. Petersburg,

but nobody troubles about the matter. As to the common prisoners, packed from thirty to forty in a cell, nauseous and suffocating, they refuse to promenade in the court-yard, because of the pestilential odour, which daily grows worse, and pass their long days and nights in counting the hours which must elapse before they leave for Siberia. The journey will, at least, give them fresh air, while here they wait for death, and talk of those who are already no more. The closing of all the windows and the empty court-yard, formerly full of prisoners, suddenly brings about a great silence. There is in this dumb and passive waiting for death, which is prolonged for weeks and months, something so awful, that the prison appears darker, and that, at times, my heart seems to cease to beat under the influence of this mental agony.

One day, at the commencement of June, Nathalie is seized with headache and a general feeling of illness. I notice on her hands and neck small red spots similar to those resulting from gnat-bites, and the doctor whom I have summoned for the second time, pronounces it to be a case of typhus. Frightened, like myself, at the news, our comrades, how I know not, succeed in sending the information to the "old Aunt." A few days later a prisoner, a thief, charged by them with the commission, slips under my door a small envelope, in which I find a large sum of money, and a slip of paper on which is printed, "Ask the Governor permission to send into town for Dr. L. Your request will be supported." The same day, after having made a pretence of finding out who are the best doctors in the town, I write my request to the Governor of the Province, and hand it to the Director together with 25 roubles for expenses, although I know there are no expenses connected with the forwarding of my letter. The Director makes no remark, but pockets the fee, although he knows full well that the regulations forbid prisoners carrying any money. At the end of the week I receive the permission asked, which seems to surprise the Director, then two days later, two eternities, during which I have written to him, I await the arrival of the doctor. Thirteen days after the fever has declared itself the long-expected doctor at last arrives, and having examined Nathalie and inspected the cell, informs me that the case is a very serious one, and that, considering the conditions under which the invalid lives, there is very little hope of recovery. Unfortunately, I know it only too well. And these conditions, which I am powerless to change, I try, with the aid of gold, to at least modify. I place at the disposal of the Director the money intended for my journey, and deposited with him by my escort. He has my

permission to take from it whatever he may please for medicines, &c., while from the money sent by the Red Cross Society I pay for every glass of water, every piece of linen that is brought me. In this place, where all are thieves, this money does much, and nobody asks where it comes from. It is, nevertheless, powerless against certain evils. Thus the prison doctor, although stimulated by the money I give him at each of his matutinal visits, and by the idea of acting with an eminent doctor who pays frequent visits, at last refuses to come by day, fearing that so much attention to a political prisoner may cause him to be suspected for being a friend to Nihilists. It is for a similar reason that the Director refuses a cell opening on the outer court-yard less infected than ours, and tells me that the outer court-yard, being semi-public—because all those who visit prisoners pass through it—he dare not put us there for fear of being suspected of encouraging relations between political prisoners and their friends outside. In spite, therefore, of the heat which daily becomes more stifling, I am forced to keep our window closed. Then at night there is no light; often no linen for the invalid, for my little portmanteau only contained a small quantity, and when I send the warder for some, promising to pay him on his return, he often comes back to me empty-handed, saying it has all been taken for others. Nathalie daily grows worse. The fever becomes so intense that she no longer recognises anyone; the red spots grow larger and darker, then they change to blue. The heat of the cell and the hardness of the prison bed combine to produce sores with which her poor body is covered. Of the weeks during which Nathalie's sickness lasts, weeks which



"SLIPS UNDER MY DOOR A SMALL ENVELOPE."

constitute the nightmare of my life, I remember but little as regards details. I remember the hours so long, even in the daytime, when, powerless to alleviate, I have listened to the invalid's groans, or wandering talk and wild laugh. Sometimes, having dropped off to sleep, I have awakened to hear her walking about

"HAD TO DRAG HER TO BED."

and suddenly falling, and then in the darkness I have had to find and drag her to bed in spite of struggles and cries.

Upheld by my attachment for Nathalie, by my desire to save a comrade, and by the fear of again being alone, I continue to fight the malady. At the same time, as day after day finds

Nathalie worse, I recognise that there can be only one issue to the struggle. Still I fight on, and throw into the strife all I have of intelligence and strength, all the need I have to love and devote myself to some good purpose, the need which is felt by all, especially the young, and which, suppressed during years of solitude, at last breaks out, until this struggle becomes a hand to hand and desperate fight with death.

At last the end comes! At the hour when the July sun as it rises inundates our black and noisome cell with purple and gold, Nathalie dies. I, who have never seen death, think she has fainted, and for a long time continue to call and sponge her with water. To-day, there is plenty of movement in our cell. First comes the warder, accompanied by a hospital nurse, an old thief and old offender, who, after having put things a little in order, dresses Nathalie in prison uniform, skirt and bodice of grey linen and white scarf around the neck. A little later comes the prison doctor to certify the death; then the Director's sister, a wicked old hypocrite, who wishes to know whether I require the prison chaplain; then the chief warder, accompanied by a common prisoner who acts as carpenter for the prison, and who takes the measure for the coffin; then my daily rations are brought in. At last, it is finished; the door is closed; and we are alone. She sleeping her last sleep, I seated at her feet on the long green form, and staring into vacancy. There is in me neither revolt nor hatred. Since this morning, as though a spring had been broken, all my physical and moral strength has abandoned me, and now I am too tired and too feeble to hate or revolt.

I do not weep! Why weep? Is not death better than such a life as this? Besides, I cannot weep! After twenty-five days' tempest of thought and emotion, my nerves refuse to vibrate, and there is in me nothing save an agony without limit; nothing, save an intense desire to lie down and, like her, to sleep to wake no more. A few hours later, just before the closing of the prison for the night, my door is again opened. Then enters the chief warder, accompanied by two great shadows carrying a long shapeless box made of rough boards; then two other shadows follow, while half-a-dozen, cap in hand, stand in the doorway as mere spectators.

The thought that all these grey shadows have come to fetch Nathalie awakens me from my stupor, and as two of them approach the bed I rise.

For some time past all these unfortunates, whose names I do not even know, have ceased to inspire me with disgust. My pity for, and suffering with, them has caused me to forget their past, and in them I recognise only a suffering portion of humanity. But as they approach the bed I feel sick at the thought of seeing Nathalie's body in hands formerly polluted by vice and crime, and attempt to restrain them. But it is useless, for I cannot replace them in their sad task. Besides, I am too late. Before I can interfere, the body, too heavy for me, only too light for them, has been placed in the long box. Ere putting on the lid, one of the shadows makes the sign of the Cross over the body; then a moment later the first nail is driven into the cover. The noise of the hammer-blows, which echo and re-echo through the prison, startles me, and something which has pressed upon me all day and almost stopped my breath seems suddenly to give way, and is followed by a torrent of tears and wild sobs. And while, with my head on the side of the empty bed, I weep long and desperately, something of sadness and pity appears on the faces of the grey shadows, who, after a month of awful sufferings, look more ghastly than ever, and near the door I hear one murmur, "Poor little ladies! ([5]) They were so young and so good."

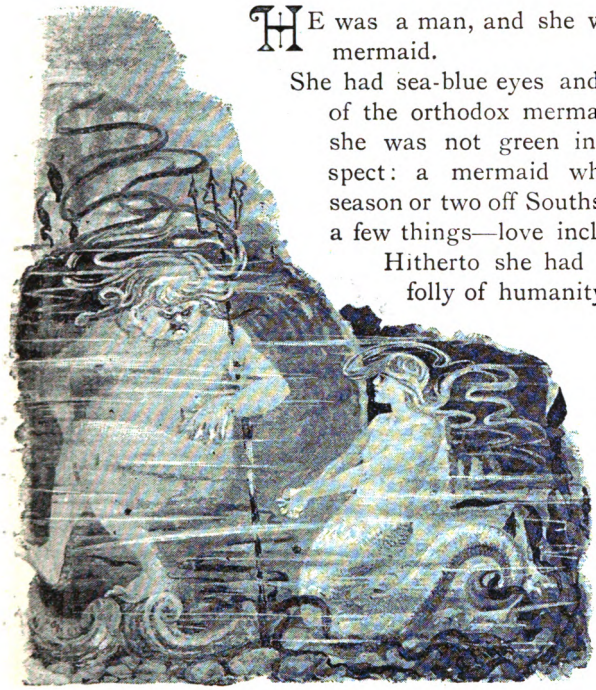
(To be continued.)

([5]) In the language of the Slavs, diminutives indicate respectful sympathy.

A Bank Holiday Idyll.

By A. Adams Martin.

Illustrations by A. Elliott.



"NEPTUNE LOOKED BORED."

HE was a man, and she was a beauteous mermaid.

She had sea-blue eyes and sea-green hair of the orthodox mermaid pattern, but she was not green in any other respect: a mermaid who has had a season or two off Southsea understands a few things—love included.

Hitherto she had laughed at the folly of humanity, but her turn came at last.

Idly playing round the pier one evening, she heard a fisherman singing.

Women and fish are alike inquisitive, and she was a little of both. She rose to listen, and her tender heart was pierced—not by the sad death of "Tom Bowling," the hero of the song, but by the handsome face of Tom Badcock, the singer.

He was only a cheesemonger's foreman, but had she known that she would not have cared. Below the surface all men are equal.

Unrequited affection is trying to mermaids. They have no bosom friends in whom to confide, and they cannot go and be missionaries, or nurses, or take to writing poetry, or philanthropic "slumming." They can only lash their tails and sing, and this becomes monotonous.

Neptune was staying off Jersey, so she swam there to seek his aid, but Neptune looked bored. He is old and infirm, nowadays, and *mésalliances* are a nuisance to him, for his trident is rusty and unequal to emergencies; so he bade her go love a Triton—a whale—a torpedo boat—*anything*, as long as it was under water—and trouble him no further.

So the poor mermaid returned sadly to Southsea, where she cruised vainly around the beach, trying to see Tom, and making the water smooth to tempt him on it.

It was so smooth that one day Tom's friend, Mr. Buffles, suggested a picnic. His sister was coming down for Bank Holiday, and Tom's "young lady" and others would be free also. Why not have a pleasure trip round the island, lunching at Ventnor, and returning by a late steamer?

The idea found favour in Tom's eyes, and preparations were accordingly made, and abundant provisions stowed away in several fat baskets.

They had ginger-beer, and bottled stout, and ham sandwiches, and cold lobsters, and cherries in bags, and all the other comestibles peculiar to the August "tripper," for, as Mrs. Buffles' mother feelingly remarked to her daughter:

"There ain't nothin' like 'avin' plenty of perwisions, Hemmer. I likes to know wot I'm eatin', and I allays 'ates them refreshment places, essept for a cup of tea or a plate of prawns."

The party was neither too small for jollity, nor too large for sociability. It comprised Mr. Buffles, bald and genial; Mrs. Buffles, small and watery-eyed; Mrs. Buffles' mother, a stout, red-faced matron, in shiny black, much addicted to bottled stout and other creature comforts; Mr. Miggs, Tom's master, a broad, rosy man in a white waistcoat, and new straw hat, which left a Cain-like brand of red upon his moist forehead when he shifted it, for the day was hot, and Mr. Miggs was as damp and flabby as one of his own Dutch cheeses. There were also Tom's young lady, Victoria Smart, and two friends of hers from a drapery establishment, and Tom himself, and two friends of his in the grocery line, and lastly, there was Mr. Buffles' sister Julia, whose stylish appearance, and barefaced appropriation of all the beaux, aroused bitter heart-burnings in the breasts of the other young women present.

There *was* another, but she was under the boat instead of in it, from whence she rose from time to time near the surface to watch her human rivals with green eyes of jealous rage. Oh, Neptune! for a gale of wind!

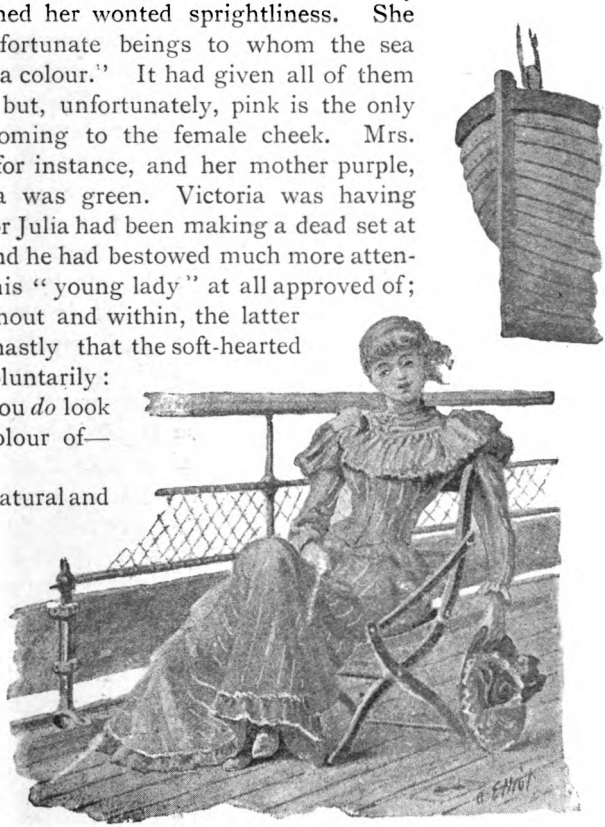
Neptune was too busy to attend to her prayer, however, and the fine weather lasted until the return journey, late in the afternoon; when he sent, somewhat tardily, a chopping sea and a breeze, which caused the ladies of the party to look dull and listless; for cold lobster and bottled stout are not of the most soothing description to the storm-tossed stomach.

Julia alone retained her wonted sprightliness. She was one of those fortunate beings to whom the sea breeze only gives "a colour." It had given all of them colour, in a sense, but, unfortunately, pink is the only hue universally becoming to the female cheek. Mrs. Buffles was yellow, for instance, and her mother purple, whilst poor Victoria was green. Victoria was having rather a bad time, for Julia had been making a dead set at Tom all that day, and he had bestowed much more attention upon her than his "young lady" at all approved of; so storm-tossed without and within, the latter began to look so ghastly that the soft-hearted Tom exclaimed, involuntarily:

"Lor! Victoria, you *do* look bad. You're the colour of—Gorgonzola!"

It was perhaps a natural and appropriate simile, but it was hardly a happy one.

Julia giggled, and the aggrieved Victoria, who had suffered many things from her rival that day, felt that the limit of endurance was passed, and extinguished her lover by asserting snappishly that she had never felt better, and he "need not imagine everybody looked like himself."



"RETAINED HER WONTED SPRIGHTLINESS."

It was hard lines for Tom also. Julia *would* languish at him, and she was pretty and lively, but his heart, as well as the shop's accounts, had been nearly a year in Victoria's keeping; and Victoria was a strict accountant of both.

As they approached Ryde the spirits of the party revived; notably those of Mrs. Buffles' mother, who declared she knew a "charmin' 'ouse for tea and prawns," and thither they repaired.

To while away the tedium of waiting the genial Mr. Miggs suggested a little music, and led off himself with a would-be comic song about a ship's crew who ate one another—which he evidently considered nautical and appropriate.

The ladies were then called on; and Julia responded, casting such languishing glances at Tom whilst singing "In the Gloaming," that Victoria grew quite ferocious, and from privately sulking, took to openly snubbing her unfortunate lover: turning her back upon him, and engaging in animated conversation with Mr. Miggs. The cheesemonger was a widower; and as solid financially as he was physically: I might also add, as easily melted.

"LED OFF WITH A WOULD-BE COMIC SONG."

Torn by jealousy in his turn, Tom found it hard to sing, when called on. He did his best, but Fate was cruel. A lap-dog in the room below joined his treble pipe to mar the pathos of the last verse, and the soul of "Tom Bowling went aloft" accompanied by the lugubrious whine of the nervous and unmusical animal.

Victoria cruelly remarked that it was a pity the duet had not been continuous. Poor Tom!

Mrs. Buffles was melted into tears, and required to be comforted with cold spirits and water. Her mother, who joined her, "just for company," she said, further withered Tom by sternly declaring that what was "the use of singing such 'orrors, when a party went out to be cheerful," *she* couldn't see!

By the time tea was ready Tom was feeling desperate. He ate his prawns, tails and all, and when Julia, who sat beside him, suggested his choking himself, he murmured, tragically, that no one would care if he did.

"Oh! Mr. Badcock, you *know* I would. Oh! what *am* I saying," cried the charmer; and Victoria, for whose benefit the first speech had been uttered, only heard the last, and gave them both a truly "killing" look.

As they walked towards the steamer, Tom framed a desperate resolution.

He would escape from both Victoria's snubbing and Julia's advances by open flight.

Just as the steamer was starting, he leaped on shore, crying :

"Good-bye, ladies! A pleasant sail!"

Julia's disappointed countenance, and Victoria's wondering, regretful gaze, were as balm to his angry spirit, and he sat down to watch the steamer out of sight, whistling, in apparent unconcern.

"Serves them right," he said to himself, with righteous indignation, and even the hoarse accents of the cheesemonger, indignant at this unaccountable conduct of his foreman's, fell unheeded on his ears.

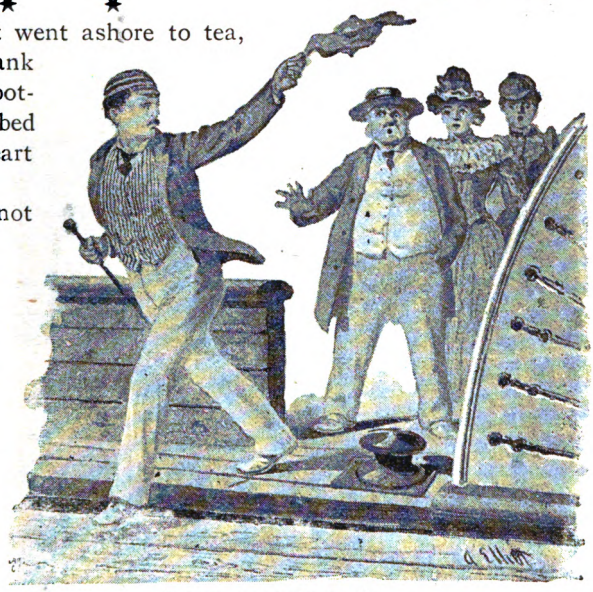
"Let 'im open 'is own shop," said Tom the mutineer.

* * *

When Tom first went ashore to tea, the poor mermaid sank sorrowfully to the bottom, where she sobbed out her lovelorn heart to a fat oyster.

Oysters are not sympathetic. Diseased ones may take to sentimental pearl-making, but your healthy oyster only lives to nourish himself.

A passing flounder stopped to listen, elevating his fins contemptuously at her folly.



"HE LEAPED ON SHORE."

"There is only one way to catch him," said he. ("Catch him" sounds coarse, but to a fish it is expressive.) "You must induce him to go out boating by moonlight, and then you must sing, and charm him into kissing you. That is the way all mermaids caught their lovers in the past, but young men now-a-days don't fancy boating by moonlight alone; and they don't want to listen to the voices of Nature."

She had listened despairingly then; but now her chance *had* come, and joyfully wagging her tail the mermaid sang.

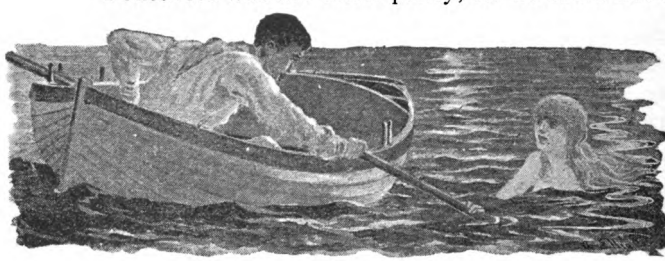
Soft and low: a sound of rippling water, and murmuring rhythmic waves, her voice came floating upwards, bringing suggestions of I know not what to Tom, for going down below he took a boat, and rowed out alone under the fair evening sky. The tide was running out, and he ran out with it. Suddenly one of his oars dipped down as if caught by an invisible hand, and in trying to recover it he leaned over the gunwale.

Then a strange thing happened. Two sea-blue eyes looked upwards into his, and the mermaid suddenly raised herself—the womanly half, at least—out of the silvery water.

Tom had a momentary shock, but he was an up-to-date young man. He had been to Westminster Aquarium, and to popular and improving lectures, where he had seen water magnified, and he knew what queer things lived in that element—so queer that he had never drunk any since! So after a slight pause he politely remarked:

"Fine evening, miss."

Politeness was his safest policy, for he could not row away.



"TWO SEA-BLUE EYES LOOKED UPWARDS INTO HIS."

"Cold," she murmured, reproachfully (she meant his speech).

"Well, it *is* fresh, now you mention it, miss—'specially when a party is—er—'decolty.'"

Tom put it delicately, for he had been to the opera, and had had a bird's-eye view of the stalls.

"You couldn't oblige me by passing that oar over there, miss," he continued, suavely, "I must look sharp about getting 'ome."

There was a pause, during which the oar drifted further off. Tom trembled.

Then the mermaid whispered softly, "Tom—I love you!"

"Oh, lor!" groaned poor Tom, "another of them!"

"Tom," she continued, passionately, "I love you as only a mermaid *can* love! Leave your sordid life and dwell with me. Down in my coral cave your life will be ever fair. There are glistening rocks, and golden sands, and pearls, and oysters—*oysters*, Tom!" Tom's mouth watered; she had played trumps.

"Natives?" he remarked, succinctly.

"Of *course*, and *so* fat! and there are sardines, and pickled salmon and cucumber!"

This was romancing, but mermaids are not ethical, and she knew the savoury dishes which the "tripper's" soul loveth.

Tom's mouth watered more.

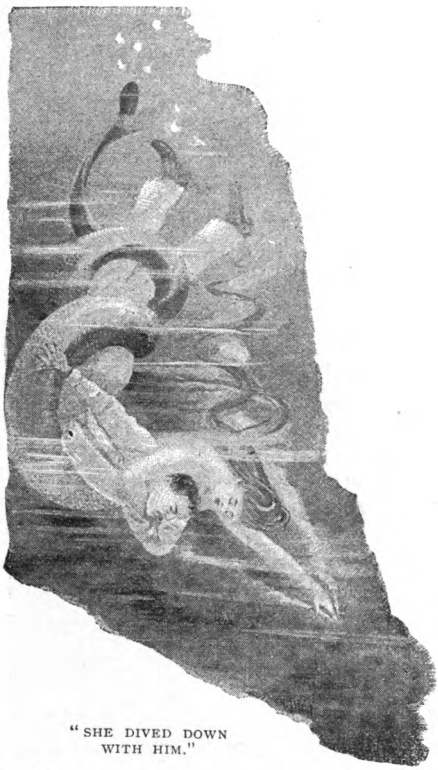
Then she put up her lips temptingly. They were red as her coral caves, and her teeth were pearls.

"Kiss me, Tom, and I will find your oar."

Tom hesitated. He was a well brought up young man, and had been to Sunday school, where he had been taught to renounce the world, the flesh, and —— *somebody* whom we should all keep at oar's length! But Tom needed that oar; once possessor of it, he could easily push her, or himself, off; and she *was* very pretty—and what was the harm? Fatal logic!

"Who hesitates is lost." He leaned over, *of course*, and pressed his lips to hers. Then, with a lash from her scaly tail, the boat upset; and catching Tom in her cold, white arms, she dived down with him to her coral caves.

Julia and Victoria never spoke afterwards. The latter wore black for a year, and then married the cheesemonger.



"SHE DIVED DOWN WITH HIM."

The boat drifted ashore, and Tom's relatives had to pay damages; but they were saved all other expenses. They put crape on their hats, and said that Tom had "gone aloft"—but he hadn't; he had gone below; though whether he ate the oysters, or they ate him, is matter of conjecture.

HENRY ARTHUR JONES.

Lions in their Dens.

HENRY ARTHUR JONES.

By Raymond Blathwayt. Portrait by Louis Gunnis.

(Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle & Young and the London Stereoscopic Company.)

IN a large and lofty room, once the studio of Alma Tadema, and the ceiling of which is adorned with mythological figures painted by the great classical artist himself, Mr. Henry Arthur Jones conceives and pens those remarkable plays of his which mark so new an era in the English dramatic world. Over the large North window is the inscription, which, as doubtless it is the motto of his distinguished predecessor's life, may well be the motto which has inspired him in his own hardworking career—"As the sun colours flowers, so art colours life." The room is hung with tapestry, and upon the walls are engravings of some of Albert Durer's choicest works. The whole *mise en scène* is in strict accordance with the life and habit of mind of a man who, perhaps more than anyone else, has done so much to bring together English literature and the English stage. It was in this room, on a very recent occasion, that I had a long conversation with Mr. Jones upon his career generally, and the art to which he has so faithfully devoted himself in particular. I will let the dramatist tell his own story in his own way. But I will first endeavour to place the man himself before my readers. Mr. Henry Arthur Jones is a slight, well-knit, brown-bearded man, with much of the countryman about him still, whose favourite recreation, indeed, is riding in the park or across a good stiff line of country. He is singularly pleasant and unaffected in manner, so simple, indeed, that one wonders how such a man could have evolved out of his own inner consciousness a character so far removed from himself as the fast-living, clever-thinking, pessimistic *Duke of Guisebury;* or such a complex being as the ascetic, self-sacrificing, and yet perjured *Judah*. One asks oneself how he obtained a knowledge of womanhood sufficiently accurate to enable him to place upon the stage the hard, careless, selfish *Drusilla;* the frivolous women in "The Crusaders"; the delicate, tender little maiden in "The Dancing Girl." But as one talks with him—and

he is a brilliant conversationalist, intense, eager, sympathetic, widely-read—one perceives that this man is a student of every phase of life, that to him the study of mankind is *the* one study worth pursuing, and one realises how the simple countryman, by way of Darwin, and Huxley, and Spencer, and even in the lines of the old English Bible itself, has arrived at a wonderfully accurate summary of our complex human life. To arrive at that summary and to act upon it has been, indeed, the work of his life. To him, the drama is but the reflex of human life. Here is his dramatic creed as he himself has written it, a series of negatives and one overpowering crowning affirmative.

MR. JONES'S HOUSE.

"There is but one thing that is worth representing on the stage—the heart and soul, the passions and emotions of man. All else is secondary, subservient, useful only as it helps to that end. When a dramatist has deafened and terrified us with a thousand explosions, he has done nothing; when he has surprised us with a situation, he has done nothing; when a stage-manager has marshalled his thousand supers, and drilled them into graceful attitudes and imposing processions, he has done nothing; when a scenic-artist has painted for us miles upon miles of Atlantic Ocean, we are yet unsatisfied, or we should be. *When a dramatist has shown us the inside of any one human heart, he has done all.*" Here, then, in brief, I have endeavoured to depict the man and the mind of him. Let him now speak for himself.

"My father," said Mr. Jones, as he gave me a very choice cigar, although I do not think he smokes himself, "is a Buckinghamshire farmer. I was born in the year 1851, and I was brought

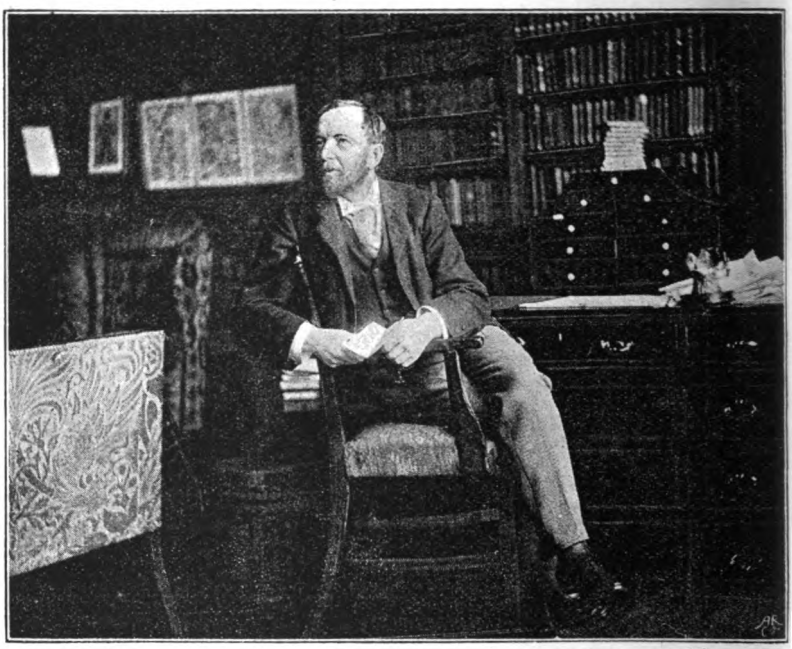
up at the Grammar School of Winslow, a little town close to our farm. I left school at the early age of thirteen, and went at once into commercial life, having had a good opening found for me with a firm in Bradford. Even at that early period I spent my leisure in writing stories and articles, which I sent in to editors, but which were always 'returned with thanks.' Business, to me, was thoroughly distasteful, although I am bound to say I got on so well as a business man that I was able to marry and settle down when I was only twenty-one years of age. At eighteen years of age, however, there happened what afterwards proved to be the turning point in my career. I had been sent to London by my employers, on business connected with the firm. At that time, Miss Bateman was attracting all London to see her performance in 'Leah the Forsaken.' Now it so chanced I had never been in a theatre in my life. My bringing up at home had been almost Puritan, and my mother herself had never entered a theatre until she was persuaded to go and see my 'Silver King.'

MR. JONES AT 13.

MR. JONES AT 18.

Well, passing the Haymarket one night, I went in, and for the first time in my life I tasted the delights of the all fascinating drama. How little I thought that in that very theatre my own 'Dancing Girl' would come to be played. That night, I say, was the turning point in my career, for, though I continued for another nine years in business, I devoted all my spare time which was not spent in the theatre studying the drama, to writing plays, which, however, were returned to me as regularly as my stories and articles had been. It was just about this period I wrote a three-volumed novel, which, as it contained the careful thought of three years in it, I was greatly disappointed to have sent back to me with the reader's opinion marked upon it, 'A

passable third-rate novel.' I used a good deal of it, however, in later years, in 'The Silver King,' so it wasn't altogether wasted. I also went in a great deal for scientific literature in those days. I read Darwin and Spencer carefully, to the deepening of the whole of one's life and views of life. Such training is especially useful to a dramatist. I don't know that I exactly believe in what has been termed the 'Mission of the Stage,' although I remember," he continued thoughtfully, "that a lady once said to me, 'I place the Stage next to the Church.' 'Why put it second?' I asked. At all events, I feel that it is possible to place before a theatre-going



MR. JONES IN HIS STUDY.

public some of the deeper problems which so exercise the minds and consciences of thoughtful people in the present day. But I was not always like this," he went on laughingly, "for I have a vague recollection that my first play contained a murder which was attributed to the wrong person—not a very hopeful sign of thought or originality that, was it? To go back to my early struggles as a dramatist. It was not till 1878 that my first play was accepted. It was a one-act play, 'Only Round the Corner,' which Mr. Rousby produced at the Exeter Theatre. It was

not at first a great success, though it won great praise when reproduced in New York the other day. I felt nearly as happy as I had done many years before, when a local paper published a letter I had written. I remember I then felt, as the French say, that 'I had arrived.' In 1879 Wilson Barrett produced my 'Clerical Error' at the Court Theatre, and that was my first

ENTRANCE TO DRAWING-ROOM.

appearance in London. In 1882 he produced 'The Silver King' at the Princess's. But perhaps the most eventful year in my dramatic career was the year 1884, when I wrote 'Saints and Sinners.' It was a new departure in every way. It presented a phase of English life which had not been touched upon before, and it dealt

with matters which had hitherto been considered beyond the province of a dramatist. There was a great deal of adverse criticism, many people denying my right to present religious problems and peoples to be discussed by the characters on a theatrical stage. The play, however, turned out a great success, and, although I was obliged for a time to write such conventionalities as 'Hoodman Blind,' 'The Lord Harry,' 'Hard Hit,' &c., I was enabled in time to begin to write plays in which there was some pretence to literary excellence, and some attempt at the solution of the deeper problems of human life, and the depiction of the character and motives of living men and women. For, in my opinion, the real test of a dramatist is whether he puts situation or character first. As I told you once before, I divide dramatists into two classes, the sheep and the goats—those who consider situation is everything, and who mould character to the situation; and those who begin with their characters, and let their characters shape and make the situation. It is so in real life. The individual, or the character of the individual, is the central fact of life. And this will be recognised in the future. The play of the future will, I think, be influenced by the scientific spirit far more than in the past. There will be a far greater care for scientific accuracy in character-drawing and attempts to deal with the questions of the day, and the later discoveries in Psychology will be reflected on the stage. The stage has a very great future before it, if it shows itself worthy and up to the scientific movement which began with Darwin. We will see attempts to deal with every pressing problem as it comes up, and as we find out, as we constantly do, that science on the stage is not interesting, except it is unobtrusive and thoroughly digested, we shall learn how to 'dish it up' most palatably. Any direct treatment of scientific discovery, or attempt to propagate doctrine, is a great failure. The secret of any work of art is as elusive as nature itself. That is not a plea for obscurity," laughingly continued my host, "but it is a truth, however paradoxical it may sound, that everybody rebels against dogma unless undogmatically conveyed."

"I quite understand that," I replied, "but now, Mr. Jones, as to the conception and the writing of a play?"

"As to the conception of a play," replied Mr. Jones, "an idea comes into my head, and simmers there for months; for instance, I have my four next plays all carefully planned out, but not a word on paper. The characters gradually evolve themselves out of chaos, the scenes come to me as I am walking or riding, the

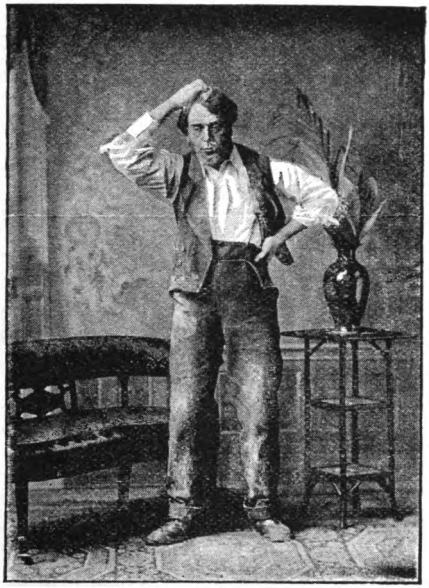
dialogue, even to a sentence, forms itself in my head. These things group themselves in my mind before I have written a line. I then roughly sketch out the whole thing, as a painter groups his figures, arranges his drapery, etc., before beginning on the actual picture. Just fetch me the preliminary papers of 'The Dancing Girl,' if you please, Mr. Day," he continued, turning to his private secretary, adding, as Mr. Day left the room, "there s an invaluable man; I don't know how I should get on without him. Now you see," he went on, as Mr. Day placed in his hands some much-bescribbled MSS.—" you see I have sketched out the special features of each character, I have marked in the scenes, every exit and entrance is arranged for, although, of course, it is subject to much alteration. So much, indeed, that in the case of this special play I had planned the whole of it without so much as a hint even of the *Duke of Guisebury*. I had another plan in which the *Duke of Guisebury* figured, but I discarded that scheme and put the character into the scheme of 'The Dancing Girl.' A play, you must know, is often a composite of different stories. In 'The Dancing Girl there are three stories, the story of *Drusilla*, the story of *John Christison*, the story of the *Duke*. All these jumped together. By-the-bye, it was Beerbohm Tree who chose the title from two or three which I suggested which took the public so much. 'Call it The Dancing Girl or The Absentee,' he said, when I was reading it over to him, and then he added, very emphatically, 'The Dancing Girl would be the best.' A good title is half the battle. I began 'The Dancing Girl' at five o'clock one Sunday morning during a summer holiday at Eastbourne." "Wasn't your *Duke of Guisebury* just a little too clever and well read for the ordinary upper class fashionable man of to-day?" I asked. "I don't think so," replied Mr. Jones. "He talked as any man about town talks in the smoking-room of a London club. He is a little

MR. BEERBOHM TREE (AS DUKE OF GUISEBURY) AND "BULLY BOY."

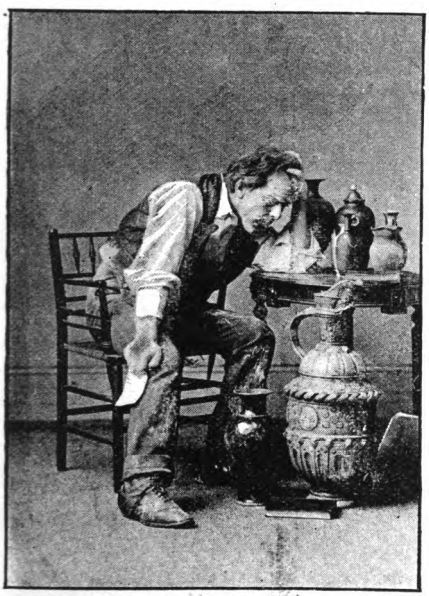
pessimistic in his utterances, perhaps. But then many are so in the present day. I am an optimist myself," he added, with a cheery laugh, "I consider this is the best possible of all lives, I could go on with it for 500 years. But then I was brought up in the country; pessimism is the outcome of city life, and I think that city life is the curse of our modern existence." "And how did you come to the writing of 'The Middleman'?" "The title, curiously enough, suggested itself first. I then wrote the play up to it. My first difficulty was to find a suitable occupation for *Cyrus Blenkarn*, the workman in the *Middleman's* employ. I looked through a catalogue of the Inventions Exhibition at Kensington, but could think of nothing suitable for stage treatment. My wife, however, was very much 'gone' on Sèvres china at the time, and she said to me one day, 'Why not make a potter of him?' and a potter he therefore became. I remember an amusing incident in connection with this play," continued the dramatist, with a smile of recollection—"when it was performed in the Potteries, the Hanley people found fault with my processes. But, hang it all," he went on, with a gesture of amused impatience, "I did not write the play to please the people of Hanley any more than I wrote 'The Bauble Shop' for members of Parliament. A dramatist must, of course, give the general impression of accuracy, but to enter into details, he would require to write a play which would take months to perform, as they do in China. I spent weeks in the House of Commons, gaining thereby a general idea of parliamentary procedure, the sum of which is contained in 'The Bauble Shop.' Of all that I saw during the eight hours I was in the House on the grand occasion when Gladstone introduced the Home Rule Bill in February, nothing was of use to me, unless, perhaps, I had had to bring on a great orator at the end of his career in my play, when a few passages from Mr. Gladstone's great speech, and some of his gestures and style, might have been worked in effectively. I often think that a dramatist's chief work, the best test of his art, lies in omission rather than in commission. I mean

MR. WILLARD IN "JUDAH."

this, he must leave out anything that would give the spectator the impression that it was out of the course of ordinary life. That construction is the best which does not challenge criticism. In melodrama and in poetic drama you get a succession of different scenes in one act, which, although it gives the playwright more freedom, is secured at the cost of constantly reminding the spectator he is in a theatre. Don't you remember how Lamb, in one of his essays, speaks of two carpenters rushing at each other, each with half a castle under his arm. That distinction between the modern play and the poetic will always exist. Has it ever struck you," continued Mr. Jones, as he wandered on in a curiously thoughtful and suggestive strain, "that what the spectator likes in the modern play is the representation of the romantic and poetic in real life? It is, as it were, an epitome of life. Our lives, generally, are prosy, but even in this life 'it isn't always washing day,' as an old village woman once said to me. We always look back on the romantic days, and, *per contra*, what they want in

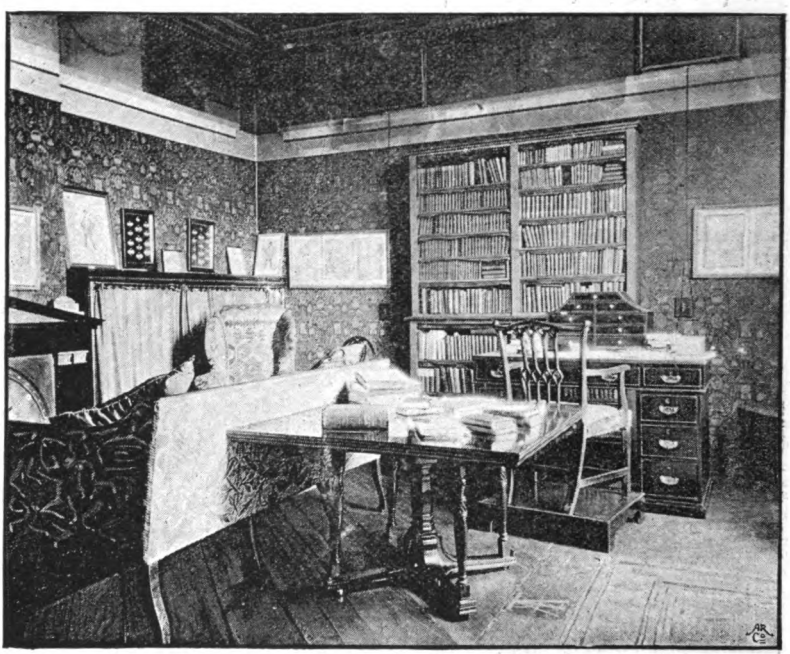


MR. WILLARD AS CYRUS BLENKARN IN "THE MIDDLEMAN."



MR. WILLARD AS CYRUS BLENKARN IN "THE MIDDLEMAN"

the poetic drama is the representation of the ordinary incidents and passions illustrated in an out-of-the-way manner. To return to 'our muttons,' 'The Bauble Shop' is, as near as may be, an epitome of present-day life. I made a careful study of parliamentary life, obtaining my information from the best authorities. With regard to the introduction of a lady who sings music-hall songs, you know as well as I do that it is one phase, and an exact one, of life as it is to-day. The music-hall fever pervades *all* classes of society. As my old lord says: 'In my young days the



THE LIBRARY.

lower classes tried to imitate us, but, by gad, nowadays, we try to imitate them.' It may be very sad, but it is perfectly true. I actually bought and studied forty different music-hall songs, for I was determined to present, in as life-like a manner as possible, a lady aping the music-hall artiste, and who should sing in the proper professional manner. The song itself, 'The Maiden up to Date,' I wrote myself, as near nature as possible."

"And what gave you the idea of 'The Bauble Shop?'" "I

hardly know. Perhaps it was the Parnell case. A statesman's career ruined by a woman."

"How do you manage with your characters, Mr. Jones? I remember I asked Mr. W. D. Howells once how far he allowed them free scope and action, and he assured me that as soon as he had fashioned them, he placed them, so to speak, on the board of life, and let them work out their own lives."

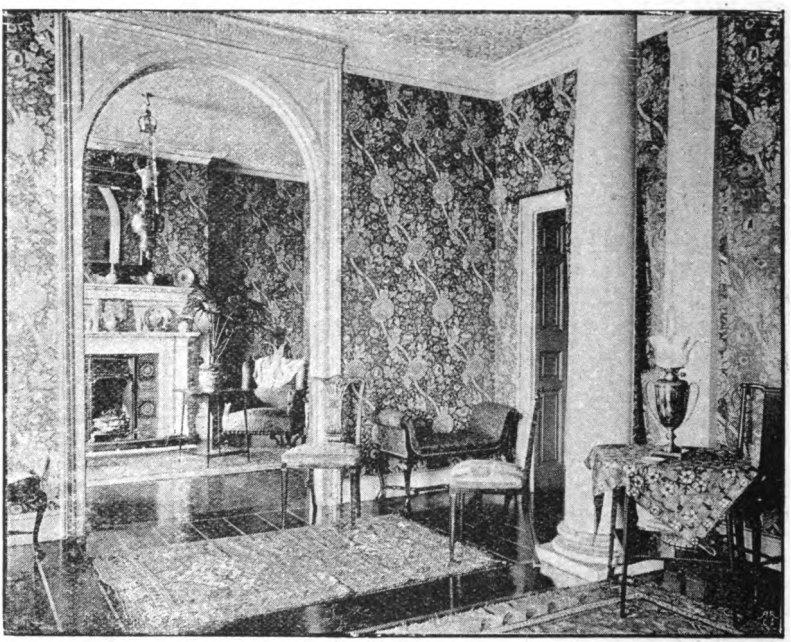
"Well," replied the dramatist, "it isn't possible to let them do that on the stage, as Howells does in his novels. I may do so when I am planning them out in my head, but not when I am writing. At first, I let them take their own way, and throw the reins on their necks, but in writing I keep them tightly reined in. You must have a definite object in a play, towards which the play is moving the whole time, and the characters therefore have to fall into line. You can't begin writing a play and not know where you are going. When Shakespeare began 'Macbeth,' he knew he was going to give a study of ambition, and that he would end in the man's ruin. There are only two endings to any play, and the fact that it is a play or a novel—a work of art and not life—demands an aim, a conclusion, tragic or happy; any other ending is unsatisfactory. Final notes of interrogation are absurd."

MR. H. A. JONES.

"Don't you find it very difficult to make your characters talk naturally, and especially so when they are as epigrammatic as yours usually are?"

"Very difficult indeed, and I will explain why. You seem to object to my being too epigrammatic, but it would be quite impossible to transcribe the ordinary everyday conversation around one, it would be too horribly commonplace; you must be an impressionist, not a photographer. A photographer instantaneously gives you the individual spokes in a whirling cab-wheel; an impressionist gives you a blur, a hint, an idea of a wheel in motion. So with the dramatist, he must give a general

idea of conversation. He must make his characters speak colloquially, and as they *might* speak in real life, for even in real life you often get *one* line, although rarely, if ever, three that could be reproduced on the stage. Every sentence in a play is carrying on the whole play, it is one brick in the building. Remember this, there is an immense framework and skeleton *behind* the dialogue. Every character has to be colloquial, individual, has to stand out clear and vivid from the rest, and has, unconsciously to himself,



THE DRAWING-ROOM.

to carry on an immense scheme, whilst all the time he is unconsciously trending to a climax three or four acts off. That is what a playwright has to learn, and it requires constant practice, for no one has any idea of the immense value of a single syllable in the modern play. I often cut out a syllable where one will do instead of two. In depicting a character a playwright draws upon the accumulated experience of a lifetime. Conversations that have lasted many hours sink into the mind, and the writer reconstructs from half-forgotten bits; the reshaping is from memory. I only once took a bit from real life.

I saw a tipsy man once at Waterloo insist that the guard should conduct him to his third-class smoking carriage, and I reproduced it in 'The Silver King.' I try to seize the most salient and vital points of character out of the many a man has, and combine them in such a way as to give an impression of reality such as would dwell in the memory of those who had constantly known him." "And as to the critical powers of your audience, Mr. Jones," said I, "don't you often find the much-abused Bond Street masher displays, now and again, an unexpected soul of appreciation?" "I *have* detected symptoms of intelligence even in a masher," smilingly replied the dramatist, "but no class has a monopoly of it. The instinct of an audience, as I told you once before—its strong, keen commonsense, is always right; its judgment often at fault. The better London is educated, the more accurate will be its judgment. But it is difficult to say who is the best patron of the modern play. Not every one can express what he feels. The only judgment I really care for is the judgment you get in London, and that has been considerably raised in value within the last ten years. But even to-day, how far we are removed from the critical power of a French audience. During the early days of Dumas's 'Francillon' at the Français, a few years back, I crushed into the second tier among a crowd of small tradesmen and the higher artisan class. The theatre was packed, and it was my only chance of seeing the piece. The play was intensely interesting and splendidly played. It was one of those curious problems in the ethics of adultery that Dumas propounds now and again to his countrymen—and that he never answers," smilingly added my host. "But it contains some wonderfully-written philosophy of Parisian life, and I was astonished and delighted to find, from watching the faces of those around me,

"SPY'S" IDEA OF MR. H. A. JONES.

and who were quite evidently of the lower classes, that they were as cordially enjoying this brilliant criticism of life as an English audience of the same class," he continued, with a fine sarcasm, "would have enjoyed seeing a low comedian sit upon a bandbox!"

"But you please the bandbox people, Mr. Jones, without giving them the bandbox?" He shrugged his shoulders. "I hope I do," he hesitatingly replied, "but it is uphill work, I can assure you, to drive home to the average man in the pit the fact that the theatre is not the equivalent of the penny show of his childhood's days, but the place where the deepest truths and experiences of human life should pass before him. I was talking to a man only the other day, a man in a better station of life than the second tier audience of the Theatre Français, and the talk turned on theatres. 'Well,' he said, 'I have only been to the theatre once in the last twelve years, and that was the other day when I took my children to see Barnum.' And that is typical of the attitude of many an Englishman towards the theatre. Still, I am sure we are improving, and there is a good time coming, but our only chance is to move away from the theatre towards the drama. You may take my word for it, the greatest enemy of the English Drama has been the English Theatre!"

Stories and Story-telling.

By Andrew Lang.

Illustrated by R. Jack.

WE have had a drought for three weeks. During a whole week this northern strath has been as sunny as the Riviera is expected to be. The streams can be crossed dry-shod, kelts are plunging in the pools, but even kelts will not look at a fly. Now, by way of a pleasant change, an icy north wind is blowing, with gusts of snow, not snow enough to swell the loch that feeds the river, but just enough snow (as the tourist said of the water in the River Styx) "to swear by," or at! *The Field* announces that a duke, who rents three rods on a neighbouring river, has not caught one salmon yet. The acrimoniously democratic mind may take comfort in that intelligence, but, if the weather will not improve for a duke, it is not likely to change for a mere person of letters. Thus the devotee of the Muses is driven back, by stress of climate, upon literature, and as there is nothing in the lodge to read he is compelled to write.

"COMPELLED TO WRITE."

Now certainly one would not lack material, if only one were capable of the art of fiction. The genesis of novels and stories is a topic little studied, but I am inclined to believe that, like the pearls in the mussels of the river, fiction is a beautiful disease of the brain. Something, an incident or an experience, or a reflection, gets imbedded, incrusted, in the properly-constituted mind, and becomes the nucleus of a pearl of romance. Mr. Marion Crawford, in a recent work, describes his hero, who is a novelist, at work. This young gentleman, by a series of faults or misfortunes, has himself become a centre of harrowing emotion. Two young ladies, to each of whom he has been betrothed, are

weeping out their eyes for him, or are kneeling to heaven with despairing cries, or are hardening their hearts to marry men for whom they "do not care a bawbee." The hero's aunt has committed a crime; everybody, in fact, is in despair, when an idea occurs to the hero. Indifferent to the sorrows of his nearest and dearest, he sits down with his notion and writes a novel—writes like a person possessed. He has the proper kind of brain, the nucleus has been dropped into it, the pearl begins to grow, and to assume prismatic hues. So he is happy, and even the frozen-out angler might be happy if he could write a novel in the absence of salmon. Unluckily, my brain is not capable of this æsthetic malady, and to save my life, or to "milk a fine warm cow rain," as the Zulus say, I could not write a novel, nor even a short story. About The Short Story, as they call it, with capital letters, our critical American cousins have much to say. Its germ, one fancies, is usually an incident, or a mere anecdote, according to the nature of the author's brain; this germ becomes either the pearl of a brief *conte*, or the seed of a stately tree, in three volumes. An author of experience soon finds out how he should treat his material. One writer informs me that, given the idea, the germinal idea, it is as easy for him to make a novel out of it as a tale—as easy, and much more satisfactory and remunerative. Others, like M. Guy de Maupassant, for example, seem to find their strength in brevity, in cutting down, not in amplifying; in selecting and reducing, not in allowing other ideas to group themselves round the first, other characters to assemble about those who are essential. That seems to be really the whole philosophy of this matter, concerning which so many words are expended. The growth of the germinal idea depends on the nature of an author's talent—he may excel in expansion, or in reduction; he may be economical, and out of an anecdote may spin the whole cocoon of a romance; or he may be extravagant, and give a capable idea away in the briefest form possible.

"WEEPING OUT THEIR EYES FOR HIM"

These ideas may come to a man in many ways, as we said, from a dream, from a fragmentary experience (as most experiences in life are fragmentary), from a hint in a newspaper, from a tale told in conversation. Not long ago, for example, I heard an anecdote out of which M. Guy de Maupassant could have made the most ghastly, the most squalid, and the most supernaturally moving of all his *contes*. Indeed, that is not saying much, as he does not excel in the supernatural. Were it written in French, it might lie in my lady's chamber, and, as times go, nobody would be shocked. But, by our curious British conventions, this tale cannot be told in an English book or magazine. It was not, in its tendency, immoral; those terrible tales never are. The event was rather calculated to frighten the hearer into the paths of virtue. When Mr. Richard Cameron, the founder of the Cameronians, and the godfather of the Cameronian Regiment, was sent to his parish, he was bidden by Mr. Peden to "put hell-fire to the tails" of his congregation. This vigorous expression was well fitted to describe the *conte* which I have in my mind (I rather wish I had it not), and which is not to be narrated here, nor in English. For a combination of pity and terror, it seemed to me unmatched in the works of the modern fancy, or in the horrors of modern experience: whether in experience or in imagination it had its original source. But even the English authors, who plume themselves on their audacity, or their realism, or their contempt for "the young person," would not venture this little romance, much less, then, is a timidly-correct penman likely to tempt Mr. Mudie with the *conte*. It is one of two tales, both told as true, which one would like to be able to narrate in the language of Molière. The other is also very good, and has a wonderful scene with a corpse and a *chapelle ardente*, and a young lady; it is historical, and of the last generation but one.

Even our frozen strath here has its modern legend, which may be told in English, and out of which, I am sure, a novelist could make a good short story, or a pleasant opening chapter of a romance. What is the mysterious art by which these things are done? What makes the well-told story seem real, rich with life, actual, engrossing? It is the secret of genius, of the novelist's art, and the writer who cannot practise the art might as well try to discover the Philosopher's Stone, or to "harp fish out of the water." However, let me tell the legend as simply as may be, and as it was told to me.

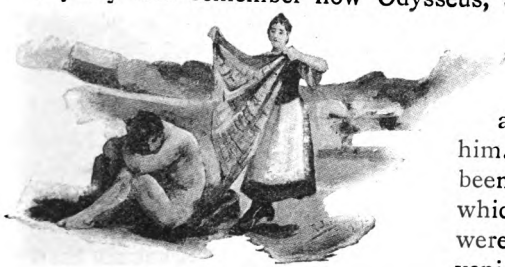
The strath runs due north, the river flowing from a great loch

to the Northern sea. All around are low, undulating hills, brown with heather, and as lonely almost as the Sahara. On the horizon to the south rise the mountains, Ben this and Ben that, real mountains of beautiful outline, though no higher than some three thousand feet. Before the country was divided into moors and forests, tenanted by makers of patent corkscrews, and boilers of patent soap, before the rivers were distributed into beats, marked off by white and red posts, there lived over to the south, under the mountains, a sportsman of athletic frame and adventurous disposition. His name I have forgotten, but we may call him Dick Lindsay. It is told of him that he once found a poacher in the forest, and, being unable to catch the intruder, fired his rifle, not at him, but in his neighbourhood, whereon the poacher, deliberately kneeling down, took a long shot at Dick. How the duel ended, and whether either party flew a flag of truce, history does not record. At all events, one stormy day in late September, Dick had stalked and wounded a stag on the hills to the south-east of the strath. Here, if only one were a novelist, one could weave several pages of valuable copy out of the stalk. The stag made for the strath here, and Dick, who had no gillie, but was an independent sportsman of the old school, pursued on foot. Plunging down the low, birch-clad hills, the stag found the flooded river before him, black and swollen with rain. He took the water, crossing by the big pool, which looked almost like a little loch, tempestuous under a north wind blowing up stream, and covered with small white, vicious crests. The stag crossed and staggered up the bank, where he stood panting. It is not a humane thing to leave a deer to die slowly of a rifle bullet, and Dick, reaching the pool, hesitated not, but threw off his clothes, took his skene between his teeth, plunged in, and swam the river. All naked as he was he cut the stag's throat in the usual manner, and gralloched him with all the skill of Bucklaw. This was very well, and very well it would be to add a description of the stag at bay ; but as I never happened to see a stag at bay, I omit all that. Dick had achieved success, but his clothes were on one side of a roaring river in spate, and he and the dead stag were on the other. There was no chance of fording

"DICK LINDSAY."

the stream, and there was then no bridge. He did not care to swim back, for the excitement was out of him. He was trembling with cold, and afraid of cramp. "A mother-naked man," in a wilderness, with a flood between him and his raiment, was in a pitiable position. It did not occur to him to flay the stag, and dress in the hide, and, indeed, he would have been frozen before he could have accomplished that task. So he reconnoitred. There was nobody within sight but one girl, who was herding cows. Now for a naked man, with a knife, and bedabbled with blood from the gralloching, to address a young woman on a lonely moor is a delicate business. The chances were that the girl would flee like a startled fawn, and leave Dick to walk, just as he was, to the nearest farmhouse, about a mile away. However, Dick had to risk it; he lay down so that only his face appeared above the bank, and he shouted to the maiden. When he had caught her attention he briefly explained the unusual situation. Then the young woman behaved like a trump, or like a Highland Nausicaa, for students of the Odyssey will remember how Odysseus, simply clad in a leafy bough of a tree, made supplication to the sea-king's daughter, and how she befriended him. Even if Dick had been a reader of Homer, which is not probable, there were no trees within convenient reach, and he could not adopt the leafy covering of Odysseus.

"SWAM THE RIVER."



"DROPPED HER AMPLE PLAID OVER HIM, AND THEN SPED AWAY."

"You sit still; if you move an inch before I give you the word, I'll leave you where you are!" said Miss Mary. She then cast her plaid over her face, marched up to the bank where Dick was crouching and shivering, dropped her ample plaid over him, and

then sped away towards the farmhouse. When she had reached its shelter, and was giving an account of the adventure, Dick set forth, like a primeval Highlander, the covering doing duty both for plaid and kilt. Clothes of some kind were provided for him at the cottage, a rickety old boat was fetched, and he and his stag were rowed across the river to the place where his clothes lay.

"WITH A BULLET IN HIS BROW."

That is all, but if one were a dealer in romance, much play might be made with the future fortunes of the sportsman and the maiden, happy fortunes or unhappy. In real life, the lassie "drew up with" a shepherd lad, as Miss Jenny Denison has it, married him, and helped to populate the strath. As for Dick, history tells no more of his adventures, nor is it alleged that he ever again visited the distant valley, or beheld the face of his Highland Nausicaa.

Now, if one were a romancer, this mere anecdote probably would "rest, lovely pearl, in the brain, and slowly mature in the oyster," till it became a novel. Properly handled, the incident would make a very agreeable first chapter, with the aid of scenery, botany, climate, and remarks on the manners and customs of the red deer out of St. John. Then, probably, one would reflect on the characters of Mary and of Richard. Mary must have parents, of course, and one would make them talk in Scotch. Probably she already had a lover; how should she behave to that lover? There is plenty of room for speculation in that problem. As to Dick, is he to be a Lothario, or a lover *pour le bon motif?* What are his distinguished family to think of the love affair, which would certainly ensue in fiction, though in real life nobody thought of it at all? Are we to end happily, with a marriage or marriages, or are we to wind all up in the pleasant, pessimistic, realistic, fashionable modern way? Is Mary to drown the baby in the Muckle Pool? Is she to suffer the penalty of her crime at

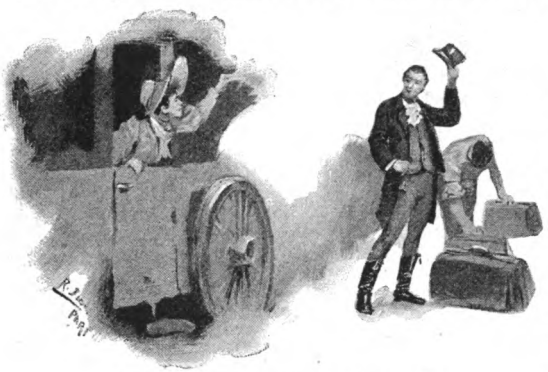
Inverness? Or, happy thought, shall we not make her discarded rival lover meet Dick in the hills on a sunny day—are they not (taking a hint from facts) to fight a duel with rifles? I see Dick lying, with a bullet in his brow, on the side of a corrie; his blood crimsons the snow, an eagle stoops from the sky. That makes a pretty picturesque conclusion to the unwritten romance of the strath.

Another anecdote occurs to me; good, I think, for a short story, but capable, also, of being dumped down in the middle of a long novel. It was in the old coaching days. A Border squire was going north, in the coach, alone. At a village he was joined by a man and a young lady; their purpose was manifest, they were a runaway couple, bound for Gretna Green. They had not travelled long together before the young lady, turning to the squire, said, "*Vous parlez Francais, Monsieur?*" He did speak French—it was plain that the bridegroom did not—and, to the end of the journey, that remarkable lady conducted a lively and affectionate conversation with the squire in French! Manifestly, he had only to ask and receive, but, alas! he was an unadventurous, plain gentleman; he alighted at his own village; he drove home in his own dogcart; the fugitive pair went forward, and the Gretna blacksmith united them in holy matrimony. The rest is silence.

"VOUS PARLEZ FRANCAIS, MONSIEUR?"

I would give much to know what that young person's previous history and adventures had been, to learn what befell her after her wedding, to understand, in brief, her conduct and her motives. Were I a novelist, a Maupassant, or a Meredith, the Muse, "from whatsoever quarter she chose," would enlighten me about all, and I would enlighten you. But I can only marvel, only throw out the hint, only deposit the grain of sand, the nucleus of romance, in some more fertile brain. Indeed, the topic is much

more puzzling than the conclusion of my Highland romance. In that case fancy could find certain obvious channels, into one or other of which it must flow. But I see no channels for the lives of these three queerly met people in the coach. As a rule, fancies are capable of being arranged in but a few familiar patterns, so that it seems hardly worth while to make the arrangement. But he who looks at things thus will never be a writer of stories. Nay, even of the slowly unfolding tale of his own existence he may weary, for the combinations therein have all occurred before; it is in a hackneyed old story that he is living, and you, and I. Yet to act on this knowledge is to make a bad affair of our little life: we must try our best to take it seriously. And so of story-writing. As Mr. Stevenson says, a man must view "his very trifling enterprise with a gravity that would befit the cares of empire, and think the smallest improvement worth accomplishing at any expense of time and industry. The book, the statue, the sonata, must be gone upon with the unreasoning good faith and the unflagging spirit of children at their play."



"HE ALIGHTED AT HIS OWN VILLAGE."

That is true, that is the worst of it. The man, the writer, over whom the irresistible desire to mock at himself, his work, his puppets and their fortunes, has power, will never be a novelist. The novelist must "make believe very much"; he must be in earnest with his characters. But how to be in earnest, how to keep the note of disbelief and derision "out of the memorial"? Ah, there is the difficulty, but it is a difficulty of which many authors appear to be insensible. Perhaps they suffer from no such temptations.

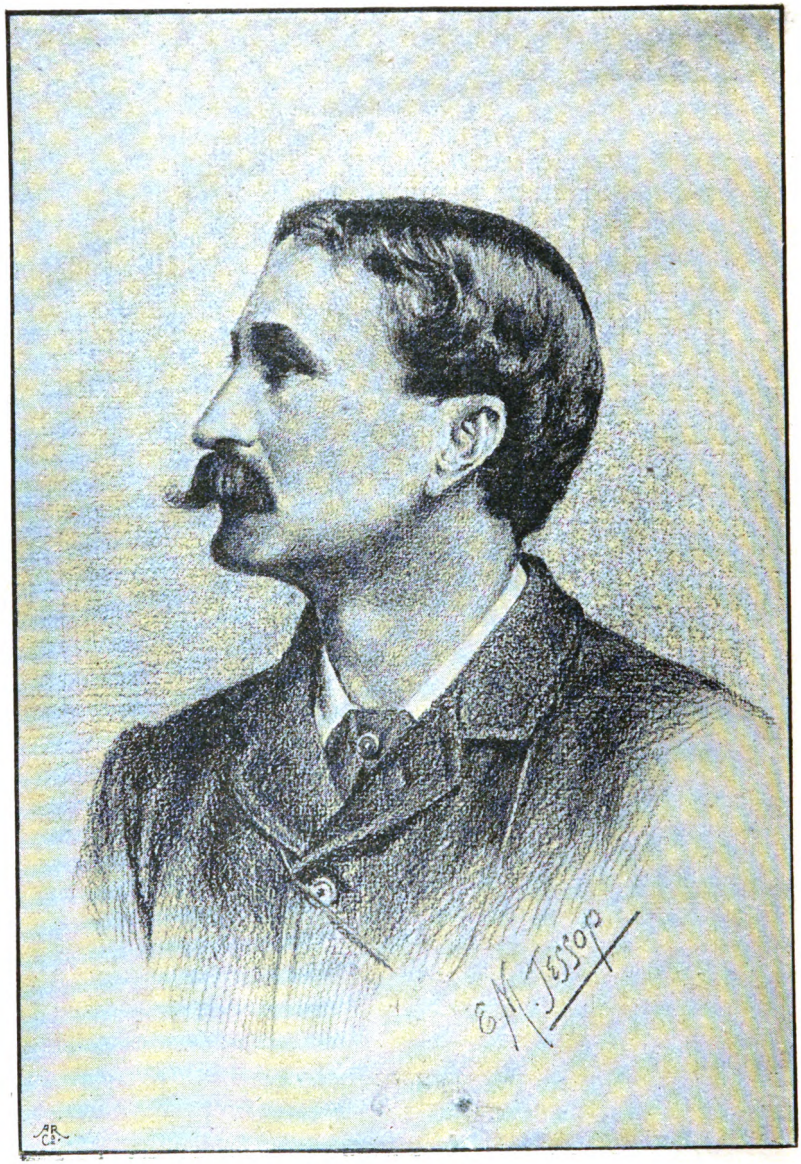
With Obvious Success!

By J. F. Sullivan.

Loafer: "Hoo ses I've bin out of imployment? I've bin as busy as yer like—that's wot I've bin. Position o' trust—"

The Rector: "Indeed! May I ask what employment—?"

Loafer: "Collectin' rents."



MR MORLEY ROBERTS.

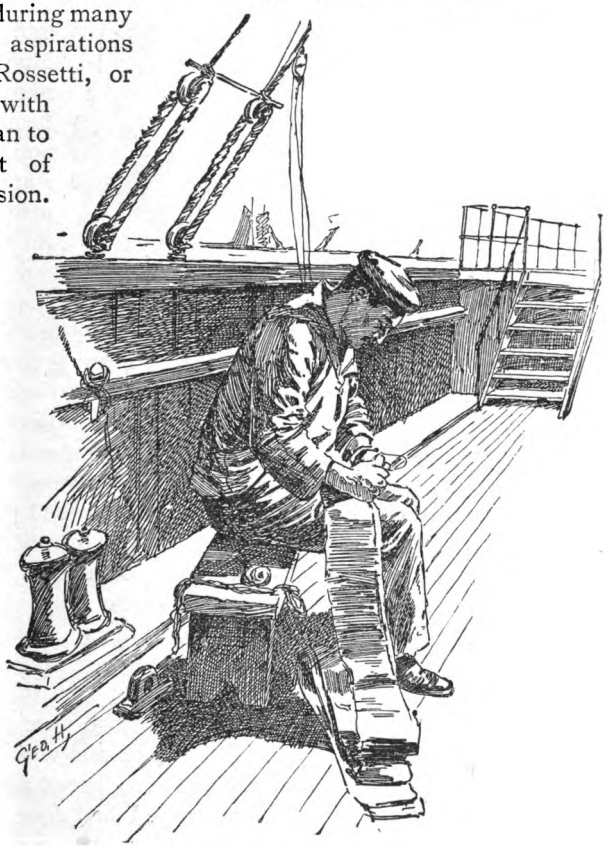
My First Book.

"THE WESTERN AVERNUS."

By Morley Roberts.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson, A. H. Fisher, and E. M. Jessop.

CERTAINLY no one was more surprised than myself when I discovered that I could write decent prose, and even make money out of it, for during many years my youthful aspirations had been to rival Rossetti, or get on a level with Browning, rather than to make a living out of literature as a profession. But when I did start a book, I went through three years of American experience like fire through flax, and wrote "The Western Avernus," a volume containing ninety-three thousand words, in less than a lunar month.



"BEFORE THE MAST."

I had been in Australia years before, coming home before the mast as an A.B. in a Blackwall liner, but my occasional efforts to turn that experience into form always failed. Once or twice, I read some of my prose to friends, who told me that it was worse even than my poetry. Such criticism naturally confirmed me in the

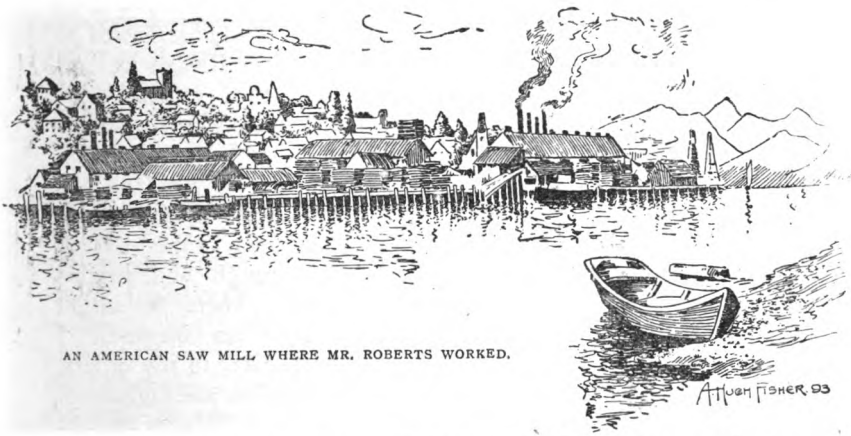
belief that I must be a poet or nothing, and I soon got into a fair way to become nothing, for my health broke down. At last, finding my choice lay between two kinds of tragedies, I chose the least, and went off to Texas. On February 27th, 1884, I was working in a Government office as a writer; on March 27th, I was sheep-herding in Scurry County, North-west Texas, in the south of the Panhandle. This experience was the opening of "The Western Avernus."

But I should never have written the book if it had not been for two friends of mine. One was George Gissing, and the other W. H. Hudson, the Argentine naturalist. When I returned from the West, and yarned to them of starvation and toil and strife in that new world, they urged me to put it down instead of talking it. I suppose they looked on it as good material running to verbal conversational waste, being both writers of many years' standing. Now I understand their point of view, and carry a note-book, or an odd piece of paper to jot down motives that crop up in occasional talk, but then I was ignorant, and astonished at the wild notion of writing anything saleable. However, in desperation, for I had no money, I began to write, and went ahead in the same way that I have so far kept to. I wrote it without notes, without care, without thought, save that each night the past was resurgent and alive before and within me, just as it was when I worked and starved between Texas and the great North-west. Each Sunday I read what I had done to George Gissing; at first with terror, but afterwards with more confidence when he nodded approval, and as the end approached I began to believe in it myself.

"MARRIED THEM ALL OFF AT THE END."

It is only six years ago since the book was finished and sent

to Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., but it seems half a century ago, so much has happened since then; and when it was accepted and published and paid for, and actually reviewed favourably, I almost determined to take to literature as a profession. I remembered that when I was a boy of eleven I wrote a romance with twenty people, men and women, in it. I married them all off at the end, being then in the childish mind of the most usual novelist who believes, or pretends to believe, or at any rate by implication teaches, that the interesting part of life finishes then instead of beginning. I recalled the fact that I wrote doggrel verse at the age of thirteen when I was at Bedford Grammar School, and that an ardent, ignorant Conservatism drove me, when I was at Owen's College, Manchester, to lampoon the Liberal candidates in rhymes, and paste them up in the big lavatory; and under the



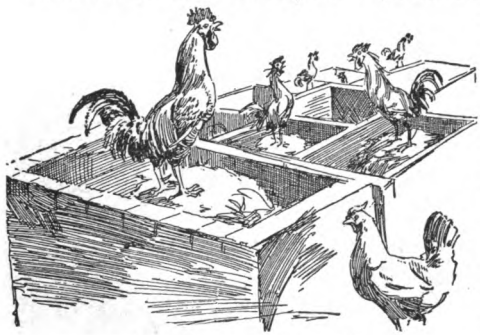
AN AMERICAN SAW MILL WHERE MR. ROBERTS WORKED.

influence of these memories I began to think that, perhaps, scribbling was my natural trade. I had tried some forty different callings, including "sailorising," saw-mill work, bullock-driving, tramping, and the selling of books in San Francisco, with indifferent financial success, so perhaps my *métier* was the making of books instead. So I went on trying, and had a very bad time for two years.

Having written "The Western Avernus" in a kind of intuitive, instructive way, it came easy enough to me, but very soon I began to think of the technique of writing, and wrote badly. I had to look back at the best parts of that book to be assured I could write at all. For a long time it was a consolation and a distress to me, for I had to find out that knowledge must get into one's fingers

before it can be used. Only those who know nothing, or who know a great deal very well, can write decently, and the intermediate state is exceedingly painful. Both the public and private laudation of my American book made me unhappy then. I thought I had only that one book in me.

Some of the letters I received from America, and, more particularly, British Columbia, were anything but cheerful reading. One man, of whom I had spoken rather freely, said I should be hanged on a cottonwood tree if I ever set foot in the Colony again. I do not believe there are any cottonwoods there, but he used a phrase common in American literature. Another whilom friend of mine, who had read some favourable criticisms, wrote me to say he was sure Messrs. Smith & Elder had paid for them. He had understood it was always done, and now he knew the truth of it, because the book was so bad. I almost feared to return to British Columbia: the critics there might use worse weapons than a sneering paragraph. In England the worst one need fear is an action for criminal libel, or a rough and tumble fight. There it might end in an inquest. I wrote back to my critics, that if I ever came out again, I would come armed, and endeavour to reply effectually.

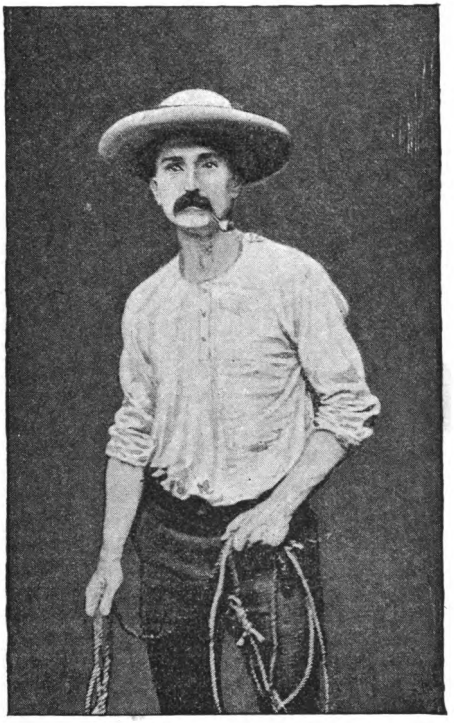


"DEFYING THE UNIVERSE."

For that wild life, far away from the ancient set and hardened bonds of social law which crush a man and make him just like his fellows, or so nearly like, that only intimacy can distinguish individual differences, had allowed me to grow in another way, and become more myself; more independent, more like a savage, better able to fight and endure. That is the use of going abroad, and going abroad to places that are not civilised. They allow a man to revert and be himself. It may make his return hard, his endurance of social bonds bitterer, but it may help him to refuse to endure. He may attain to some natural sight.

Not many weeks ago I was talking to a well-known American publisher, and our conversation ran on the trans-oceanic view of Europe. He was amused and delighted to come across an

Englishman who was so Americanised in one way as to look on our standing camps and armed kingdoms as citizens of the States do, especially those who live in the West. To the American, Europe seems like a small collection of walled yards, each with a crowing fighting-cock defying the universe on the top of his own dunghill, with an occasional scream from the wall. The whole of our international politics gets to look small and petty, and a bitter waste of power. Perhaps the American view is right. At any rate, it seemed so when I sat far aloof upon the lofty mountains to the west of the great plains. The isolation from the politics of the moment allowed me to see nature and natural law.



"COWBOY ROBERTS."

And as it was with nations, so it was with men. Out yonder, in the West, most of us were brutal at times, and ready to kill, or be killed, but my American-bred acquaintances looked like men, strikingly like men, independent, free, equal to the need of the ensuing day or the call of some sudden hour. It is a liberal education to the law-abiding Englishman to see a good specimen of a Texan cowboy walk down a Western street: for he looks like a law unto himself, calm and greatly assured of the validity of his own enactments. We live in a crowd here, and it takes a rebel to be himself; and in the struggle for freedom he is likely to go under.

While I was gaining the experience that went solid and crystallised into "The Western Avernus," I was discovering much that had never been discovered before, not in a geographical sense, for I have been in few places where men have not been, but in

myself. Each new task teaches us something new, and something more than the mere way to do it. To drive horses or milk a cow, or make bread, or kill a sheep, sets us level with facts and face to face with some reality. We are called on to be real, and not the shadow of others. This is the worth that is in all real workers, whatever they do, under whatever conditions. Every truth so learnt strips away ancient falsehood from us; it is real education, not the taught instruction which makes us alike, and thus shams, merely arming us with weapons to fight our fellows in the crowded, unwholesome life of falsely civilised cities.

And in America there is the sharp contrast between the city life and the life of the mountain and the plain. It is seen more clearly

"THE VERY PRAIRIE DOGS TAUGHT ME."

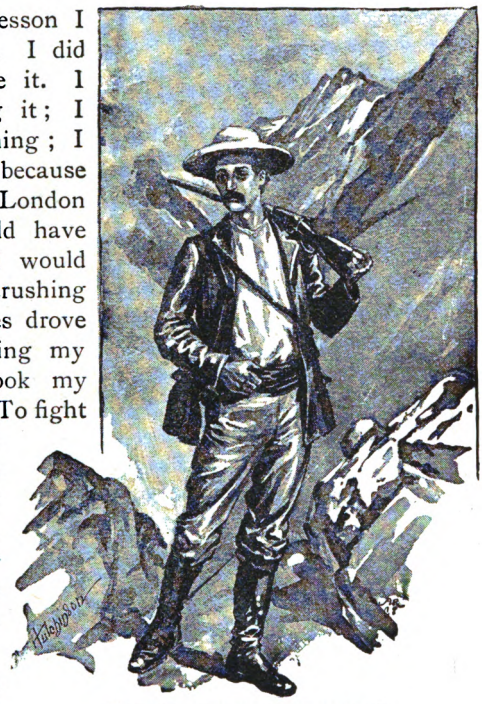
than in England, which is all more or less city. There are no clear stellar interspaces in our life here. But out yonder, a long day's train ride across the high barren cactus plateaus of Arizona teaches us as much as a clear and open depth in the sky. For, of a sudden, we run into the very midst of a big town, and shams are made gods for our worship. It is difficult to be oneself when all others refuse to be themselves.

This was for me the lesson of the West and the life there. When I wrote this book I did not know it; I wrote almost unconsciously, without taking thought, without weighing words, without conscious knowledge. But I see now what I learnt in a hard and bitter school.

For I acknowledge that the experience was at times bitterly painful. It is not pleasant to toil sixteen hours a day; it is not good to starve overmuch; it is not well to feel bitter for long

months. And yet it is well and good and pleasant in the end to learn realities, and live without lies. It is better to be a truthful animal than a civilised man, as things go. I learnt much from horses and cattle and sheep; the very prairie dogs taught me; the ospreys and the salmon they preyed on expressed truths. They didn't attempt to live on words, or the dust and ashes of dead things. They were themselves and no one else, and were not diseased with theories or a morbid altruism that is based on dependence.

This, I think, is the lesson I learnt from my own book. I did not know it when I wrote it. I never thought of writing it; I never meant to write anything; I only went to America because England and the life of London made me ill. If I could have lived my own life here I would have stayed, but the crushing combination of social forces drove me out. For fear of cutting my own throat I left, and took my chance with natural forces. To fight with nature makes men, to fight with society makes devils, or criminals, or martyrs, and sometimes a man may be all three. I preferred to revert to mere natural conditions for a time.



"THE CALIFORNIA COAST RANGE."

To lead such a life for a long time is to give up creeds, and to go to the universal storehouse whence all creeds come. It is giving up dogmas and becoming religious. In true opposition to instructive nature, we find our own natural religion, which cannot be wholly like any other. So a life of this kind does not make men good, in the common sense of the word. But it makes a man good for something. It may make him an ethical outcast, as facts faced always will. He prefers induction to deduction, especially the sanctioned unverified deductions of social order. For Nature affords the only

verification for the logical process of deduction. "We fear Nature too much, to say the least." For most of us hold to other men's theories instead of making our own.

When Mill said, "Solitude, in the sense of being frequently alone, is necessary to the formation of any depth of character," he spoke almost absolute truth. But here we can never be alone; the very air is full of the dead breath of others. I learnt more in a four days' walk over the California coast range, living on parched Indian corn, than I could have done in a lifetime of the solitude of a lonely house. The Selkirks and the Rocky Mountains are books of ancient learning: the long plains of grey grass, the burnt plateaus of the hot South, speak eternal truths to all who listen. They need not listen, for there men do not learn by the ear. They breathe the knowledge in.

In speaking as I have done about America I do not mean to praise it as a State or a society. In that respect it is perhaps worse than our own, more diseased, more under the heel of the money fiend, more recklessly and brutally acquisitive. But there are parts of it still more or less free; Nature reigns still over vast tracts in the West. As a democracy it is so far a failure, as democracies must be organised on a plutocratic basis; but it at any rate allows a man to think himself a man. Walt Whitman is the big expression of that thought, but his fervent belief in America was really but deep trust in man himself, in man's power of revolt, in his ultimate recognition of the beauty of the truth. The power of America to teach lies in the fact that a great part of her fertile and barren soil has not yet been taught, not yet cultivated for the bread which of itself can feed no man wholly.

Perhaps among the few who have read "The Western Avernus" (for it was not a financial success), fewer still have seen what I think I myself see in it now. But it has taken me six years to understand it, six years to know how I came to write it, and what it meant. That is the way in life: we do not learn at once what we are taught, we do not always understand all we say even when speaking earnestly. There is often one aspect of a book that the writer himself can learn from, and that is not always the technical part of it. All sayings may have an esoteric meaning. In those hard days by the camp fire, on the trail, on the prairie with sheep and cattle, I did not understand that they called up in me the ancient underlying experience of the race, and, like a deep plough, brought to the surface the lowest soil which should hereafter be a little fertile. When I starved, I thought not of our far

ancestors who had suffered too; as I watched the sheep or the sharp-horned Texas steers, I could not reflect upon our pastoral forefathers: as I climbed with bleeding feet the steep slopes of the Western hills, my thoughts were set in a narrow circle of dark misery. I could not think of those who had striven, like me, in distant ages. But the songs of the camp fire, and the leap of the flame, and the crackling wood, and the lofty snow-clad hills, and

'BY THE CAMP FIRE."

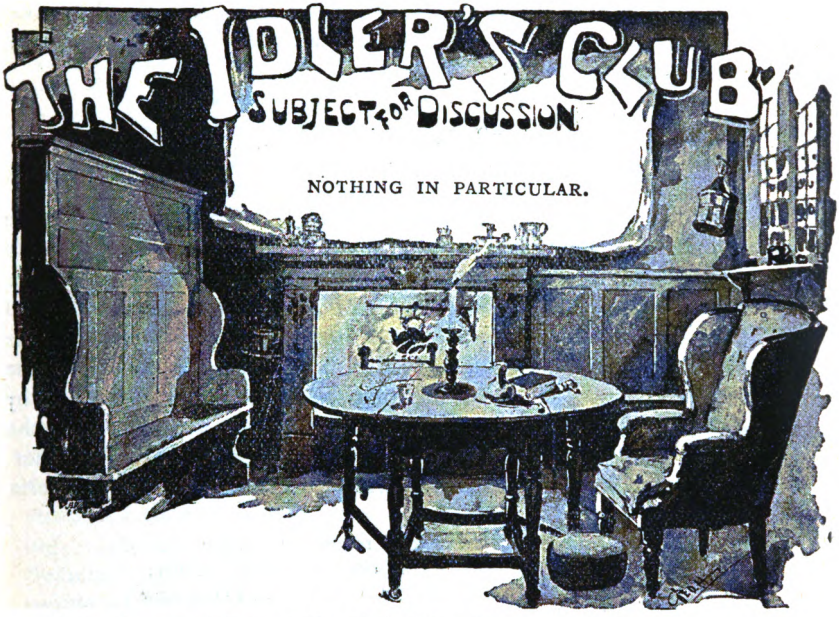
the long dim plains, the wild beast, and the venomous serpents, and the need of food, brought me back to Nature, the Nature that had created those who were the fathers of us all, and, bringing me back, they taught me, as they strive to teach all, that the real and deeper life is everywhere, even in a city, if we will but look for it with unscaled eyes and minds set free from the tedious trivialities of this debauched modern life.

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

JEROME K. JEROME.

"Humour is not so much a peculiar way of looking at life, as of expressing what one sees and knows of life. Humourists see as clearly as anyone, and perhaps more clearly than many, the deep, true side of human life."



Barr on the evils of popularity.

It is always a pleasure for the editor of a magazine to receive letters grumbling about the periodical. When these letters come in with reasonable frequency he knows he is on the right track; he feels he is doing his duty. Some people appear to entertain the strange delusion that an editor desires to please everybody. Far from it. Just ponder a moment on the awful consequences that would result from the publication of a magazine that exactly suited every taste. There are nearly 50,000,000 people in England, or, at least, there were that number until the Chicago Exhibition started. Anyhow, there are in the two great English-speaking nations, say, 120,000,000 people. Let us cast aside the odd 20,000,000—few magazines can afford to waste that many subscribers, but let them go to even up matters—and imagine that *The Idler* pleased the remaining hundred million. They would all take it, of course. Instantly there would be a panic in the printing world. All the presses in England and America could not supply the demand. Nobody else could get anything printed. The book trade would be paralysed; railway traffic would be demoralised; all the news-agents would be swamped by a flood of *Idlers;* the other magazines would go bankrupt; everybody connected with *The Idler* would be so rich that there would be no living with them; goodness knows, the office boy is proud enough as it is. No; it

would never do. We don't study to please, and hope by strict attention to business to merit further favours. Those who write in and complain will now understand why the changes they suggest are not made.

* * * *

And poetry.

Now here is a correspondent in Belfast who doesn't like the Idlers' Club. The subjects set fail to please him. He wants a discussion on "Mal de mer," "Men's experience in housekeeping," "The Baby," "The remarks one would like to recall," and that sort of thing. He seems to regret the taking off of the men with their feet on the mantelpiece, and the substitution of another picture at the head of this department. Perhaps this month's Idlers' Club will please him better, as there is no set subject, a literary go-as-you-please race, as it were. The Belfast man adds to the Irish troubles by dropping into poetry. Here are two verses given so that the public may know what an editor is often called upon to suffer. And yet editors are debarred from competing for the Victoria Cross!

No wonder that vacancy reigns in the place
Where all creature comforts are held in disgrace;
That stiff-backed old bench on the left to our view
Suggests very strongly the shape of a pew.

The crazy old table, and high-backed chair,
The general cheerfulness, all declare
The place only fit for a gravedigger's home,
Or for parsons to gloat on the evils to come (on others).

* * * *

A fair exchange.

Mr. W. D. Howells, in a recent magazine article on "The Country Printer of America"—Howells was a country printer himself once, and so knows what he talks about—said that butter, eggs, chickens, cordwood and such, were accepted by the country printer gratefully instead of cash. He was pleased to get subscriptions for his weekly paper in almost any commodity. This custom has never been introduced into London. No one—at least so the editor of the *Times* informs me—has ever yet driven to the office in Printing House Square with a cartload of apples or potatoes, expecting to get the paper for a year in return for his produce Neither has *The Idler* (valuable magazine as it is) been favoured with any orders of this kind, yet we are pleased to learn that the truck appears to be coming this way, although, when last heard from, it had got no nearer than Newfoundland. The price of a copy of *The Idler* in

nice savoury trout is now a fixed quantity. In proof of this Mr. C. M. Horton, of Woolwich, writes as follows:—

"My brother, a civil engineer at present surveying for a new railway in Newfoundland, has been lately very hard up for food and cash, owing to a delay in obtaining supplies on account of bad weather, which prevented the men sent out from getting back to camp. In this emergency he exchanged an *Idler* which I had sent him for half-a-dozen fine trout, thus finding your entertaining magazine doubly useful, and showing the estimation in which it is held by colonists."

* * * *

Burgin narrates his experiences.

It's the fashion to sneer at tales about Canadian newspaper offices and the woes of their editors. But for real unadulterated liveliness commend me to a little country office which I once "ran" there. I was sub-editor, reporter, poet, and, indeed, most of the "staff," and my chief, wanting a holiday, left me in charge. "Make it lively," he said, as he wished me good-bye, "and get up a boom." At that age, I would have edited Confucius without the slightest misgiving. For some days all went well, but people were preternaturally good, which was strange, considering that there had recently been a revival meeting. There's generally a reaction after one of those meetings. Somebody gets drunk, or steals a horse, or robs a bank. But people were too badly scared by the last preacher to do anything of the sort. I wrote an article about Boadicea and her methods of driving, but the "comps" still wanted two columns wherewith to fill the vacant space. You know how it is when "the devil" demands "copy," and Nature says stop. Just in the nick of time, however, a butcher on the other side of the river shot off his nephew's arm. It seemed as if Providence had really watched over us and heard my prayers for a boom. We headed the article in big letters, "Murderous Outrage! An Uncle Shoots off his Nephew's Arm!! The Miscreant still at Large!!!" and a few other little complimentary remarks. When I went down to the office the next morning, there wasn't a paper left. People were driving into town for more copies. I was pleased to see the effect of my remarks on Boadicea, and said so. The postmaster, however, advised me to flee. He said that the butcher was rapidly nearing the village with a cowhide, and was so strong that he disdained to bring his gun. Of course, I couldn't run before a mere Canadian, although I wanted to—badly. The butcher came into the office, and asked to see the editor. I said he saw the editor. He looked at my diminutive form, and used language which I will not repeat, but which implied that I was a near relation of

Ananias. I retorted with "*We* accept the responsibility for this article," whereupon he made for me with a ruler, but the crowd rushed in, seized the butcher, and ducked him in the river, owing to the coarseness of his methods rather than from any other motive. When the editor came back he patted the lump on my head left by the ruler, and said that I only wanted a little more encouragement to become really great.

* * * *

Zangwill discountenanceth discount.

But surely the man who bought *The Idler* for six trout wanted a discount of twenty-five per cent. Surely he would have wanted to give only four and a-half trout. If he really offered the whole six trout, and didn't even want one and a-half change, why let us authors all fly to this Newfoundland where he lives! What a strange world of make-believe it is! We are so habituated to shams that we cannot help shamming even where there is nothing to be gained by it. Why is music published at four shillings when you can buy it for one and four, or at most one and eight? Why are novels published at thirty-one and six and the magazines at a shilling? "Shilling shockers" are sold at ninepence, which is as comical as selling "tenpenny nails" at sixpence. The same principle rules in other trades. It almost seems as if there is an ineradicable instinct in humanity for getting things below their price, even if at more than their value. Hence the marked popularity of "sales" and "reductions." The idea of getting things cheap reconciles one to getting things one doesn't want. The craze for cheap things leads one into frightful extravagance. In some shops the weakness of humanity is pandered to without disguise, and every article is ticketed with a little card from which the first price is carefully ruled out, and even on the second price you get a discount for cash. This same discount for cash is at least intelligible, but business men are painfully familiar with another wonderful deduction. After you wait months for your money, you get a cheque less "discount on payment." This seems to involve an exasperating Hibernicism. "On payment," forsooth! So long as it remains unpaid, the debt due to you is, say, one hundred pounds. But the moment you really get it, it shrinks to ninety-five. Why not call it ninety-five at the start and be done with it? But no! men will not give up the subtle pleasure of discounts, ineffably childish though it be. The rather deaf lady who being asked six shillings a yard for stuff replied "Sixteen shillings a yard! I'll

give you eleven," and who, when her mistake was pointed out, said, "I couldn't think of paying more than four and sixpence," was a genuine type of the population of these islands. I don't mind confessing I intend to defy this deep-seated infantile instinct, and to try to break down the absurdity in literature, for one day I am going to bring out a shilling book that will be sold for twelvepence. I know the public would prefer to have the book marked two shillings and to pay eighteenpence, but I wish to make them a present of sixpence each, despite themselves. If they don't want the sixpence, they can present it in my name to the Poor Children's Country Holiday Fund.

* * * *

He maketh an excursion.

I have often wondered what country children do for a holiday? Do good people go round collecting to give them a day in London or Liverpool or Manchester, so that their stunted lives that stretch on from year to year with never a whiff of town fog, never a glimpse of green 'buses, or dangerous crossings or furnace-smoke, may be expanded and elevated? If not, I beg to move the starting of a Town Fund at once. Nothing can be more narrowing than rustic existence—there are old yokels whose lives have always moved within a four-mile radius, women who have grown grey without ever knowing what lay beyond the blue hills that girdled their native village. I once knew a chawbacon who came to town and was barked at by a street-dog. He stooped down to pick up one of the rough stones lying in the roadway to ward it off withal, but to his astonishment the stone refused to budge, for it was an integral part of the road. "Danged if that baint queer!" he exclaimed. "At home the dogs be tied and the stones be loose. Here the dogs be loose and the stones be tied." Now, if that man had enjoyed a school excursion to the town when a boy, he would have deprived me of a good story. A glimpse of the town in youth might also do good in checking the perpetual urban immigration, which, alas! removes so many of the rustic population from the soil, and places them under it. To this end all school excursions to London should take place in November. Yes, there is a vast future before that fund, and I shall be happy to start it with five thousand pounds, if two hundred and sixty-three one-armed Scotchmen of good moral character will bind themselves to do the same.

Alden thinks the country demoralising.

Zangwill's proposal to start a Town Fund is an excellent one. It might accomplish wonders in elevating the moral tone of country boys. As every man of experience knows, the country is a frightfully demoralising place. You may be, as I hope you are, a man of reasonable veracity, but if you go for a month to the sea-shore or the mountains your veracity will undergo a strain which in all probability will be fatal to it. You go, let us say, to Switzerland, and you find that public opinion is bent upon forcing you to climb mountains, or to take preposterous and exhausting walks. Some men meekly yield, and do their best to bring on heart disease by over-exerting their legs, and then spend the rest of their embittered existence in using bad language about the mountains. Other and wiser men seek refuge in falsehood. They get up early in the morning, and sneak out of the back door of their hotel with a blanket and a pillow, and take a nap in the nearest thicket. Then they return with their blankets and pillows strapped on their backs, and, entering the breakfast-room a little late, lie about the mountains that they claim to have climbed since early dawn. Occasionally they lie not wisely but too well, as the man whom I met at Zermatt last summer, and who claimed to have gone to the top of the Matterhorn and back between four and eight o'clock in the morning. Several people seemed to doubt the truth of his story, and this pained him. However, a man who lies about his mountains with ordinary intelligence is readily believed, and by the time he gets back to England he has become a confirmed and hardened liar. If he goes to Scotland or to Norway, instead of Switzerland, he similarly resorts to falsehood, in order to preserve the respect of other people—only he lies about the trout and salmon that he has not caught, instead of lying about mountaineering feats. Now, the man who stops at home escapes this terrible temptation, and remains a conscientious and truthful person. London may not be quite as picturesque as the Oberland or the Highlands, but it does not ask to be lied about, whereas the mountains never permit a man to tell the truth. Look at the Swiss hotel-keepers, who are born and bred among mountains! There are hotel-keepers in Interlaken who will tell you lies so towering and majestic that the Jungfrau dwindles to a hillock in comparison with them. I used to think that the hotel-keepers were deserving of blame in this matter, but now I know that the fault lies with the mountains. No man can tell the truth in the presence of mountains 14,000 feet high.

The sea-side is very little better than the mountains. If you go to the sea-shore and decline to bathe you are looked at as an unclean heathen. Now, no man likes sea-bathing when he can bathe in a quiet and Christian tub. The way in which the surf splashes you, and the salt gets into your eyes, and the public scoffs at the peculiarities of your figure as revealed by your bathing-dress, is simply disgusting. In these circumstances the weak man bathes and suffers, while the bolder man stops on dry land and lies. He pretends that he has bathed "way down the beach" early in the morning, and says that there is nothing in the world that he loves so much as a delicious surf bath before the sun is fairly up. He is generally obliged to tell this lie, fifteen or twenty times a day, and the aggregate amount of lying of which he is guilty during his month's holiday is something appalling. If he had remained in town he need not have told a single lie, except, of course, in the way of business. That editors of daily newspapers and professional politicians should visit the sea-shore in order to brace themselves up for their daily work is all very well, but no really good man should risk his veracity within sound of the surf. Were country boys to be brought into town two or three times a year, they would escape temporarily from the demoralising society of mountain and beach, and would be led by the sweet influence of asphalt and omnibuses, and match-girls, into the paths of truth and virtue. Hundreds of country boys might thus be saved, who would otherwise grow up to be habitual liars, and finally fill an equal number of book-agents' graves. Depend upon it, the town is the only proper place for the cultivation of morality. Possibly virtue may maintain a precarious sort of existence on a prairie, or on, say, Salisbury Plain, but in a country of hills and dales, and trout and salmon streams, and sea-beaches and bathing-machines, virtue goes helplessly to the wall.

Also the sea-side.

* * * *

What I wish to know is why the term "Cockney" is held to be a term of such bitter reproach. It is as if the most scathing insult possible to be offered to an ancient Greek had been to dub him an Athenian; or the severest criticism to be passed upon a Latin writer to hint that his style was that of a citizen of Rome. Frenchmen do not sneer at Parisians, and the circumstance that a man first saw the light within the precincts of Edinburgh does not cause him to be regarded as a leper throughout the rest of Scotland. But an

Jerome seeks information.

Englishman born ten miles of Charing Cross every self-respecting Briton is supposed to hold in horror and detestation. I speak feelingly upon the subject, having suffered. Whenever the superior book-reviewer, sampling a new work of mine, has exhausted upon me all his stock epithets of cad, boor, blackguard, snob, liar, brute, bank-clerk, new humorist, thief, upstart, and such-like subtle thrusts characteristic of the new criticism, he invariably concludes his "notice" by calling me a "Cockney." The main portion of this abuse I have by long practice schooled myself to bear with equanimity. I even endeavour to derive from it some benefit, as one should from all criticism. But the "bank-clerk" and the "Cockney" do, I confess, rankle within my breast. I have never been a bank-clerk. I have served as clerk in most other offices, but never in a bank. It is the one literary sin that I can lay my hand upon my heart and say that I have not committed. To call me "Cockney" is even more unjust. Meaning from the beginning to be a writer, I took the precaution of selecting my birthplace in a dismal town in the centre of the Staffordshire coalfields, a hundred and fifty miles, at least, away from London. This I can prove; and once or twice, stung to madness by the falseness of the charge, I have started to institute proceedings for libel against the paper making it. In the soothing atmosphere of my solicitor's waiting-room, however, there has always come to me the reflection: What particular insult lies in the term "Cockney"? Why should I, accustomed to have hurled at me half the nouns in the slang dictionary, resent, above all others, the one term "Cockney"? Even if the accusation were true, what harm would there be in it? Why should I be ashamed of being supposed to be a native of the greatest and most cultured city in the world, the richest and most Christian town under heaven, the hub of commerce, science and art, the home of the Nonconformist conscience, the old humour, and the new criticism? Yet I am. The whole thing is a mystery to me.

* * * *

On a question of fairness.

And while on this subject of criticism, there is another thing I wish to know, namely, whether it is fair and honest that one reviewer, who may possibly have a personal grudge against, or a strong dislike to, some particular author, should be allowed to represent a number of different newspapers, and thus make it appear to the public that a book is condemned and contemned by six distinct organs of the Press, when, as a matter of fact, the whole half-dozen

attacks are the work of one single individual. Suppose, for instance, that a certain superior young man and myself have in old days disagreed upon matters of more interest to ourselves than to the public, or that he is able to boast of "never having had the insult of a success," while he considers that I have, and likes me none the better for it. Suppose that, in course of time, this superior young man, who "has never had the insult of a success," comes to be the literary critic of a weekly review, a daily newspaper, and an evening gazette. In the weekly review he says that my book is rubbishy twaddle, and calls me a blackguardly Cockney. In a leaderette in the daily newspaper he says my book is twaddly rubbish, and calls me a Cockney blackguard. In the evening gazette he says the book is a mixture of rubbish and twaddle, and calls me a cross between a Cockney and a blackguard. "Oh!" say the public, "here are three independent newspapers all abusing this book. It must be bad. The unanimity is quite extraordinary." The matter has been discussed, and will be again and again, I daresay, until the public have learned something about the methods and value of criticism. But there, that is the worst of these free and easy discussions, where one is not tied down to any special subject, but allowed to chatter about "nothing in particular." It so generally ends in one's talking about oneself.

* * * *

Barry Pain on pigs.

And, of course, you are singularly fortunate if you have never been cajoled into an attempt to draw a pig blindfold. The pig is—for the purposes of the blindfold and inartistic—a parallelogram, having his snout at the top left-hand corner, his tail at the top right-hand corner, and two legs at each of the lower corners. It is obvious that you do not get this right, but it is certainly queer that nearly everybody goes wrong at just the same point. You start at the pig's snout, and you go to the right as far as his tail; you descend, and make his two hind legs. After this you go wrong—always in the same way—you do not go back far enough to the left, and the pig's chest and front legs come immediately under the centre of his back. A little thing like this shows how similar we all are. There must be so many ways of drawing a pig wrong, and yet we nearly all select the same. On the top of an omnibus, provided with the usual arrangement of garden seats, it is nearly always the same seat which is the last to be occupied; there seems to be no reason for the selection, but we all follow it unconsciously. If any man ever appreciated how like he was to every other man, he would

die of mortification. We have much the same limitations. We all die, and the cleverest of us cannot invent a perfect tobacco pipe.

* * * *

And pipes.

That last is a real tragedy to many smokers. We do not talk about it much; but we feel it very deeply, and we often think of it. If you catch a smoker in a brown study, and ask him what he is thinking about, he will reply, "Nothing in particular." He says that in order that he may not depress you; he is really thinking about the smoker's great sorrow—that it is impossible on this fair earth of ours, with all the subtle resources of a complex civilisation, to produce one perfect pipe. Natural laws do not permit of it. It is of no use to rebel against them. We can only fold our hands and endure. And for want of a perfect pipe, our smoke is but a shadow of what it might be. In the first place, the ordinary pipe has not a sufficiently large bowl. To the superficialist, that may seem easy of remedy. "Then," he says, "make a pipe with a larger bowl." If we did that, the smoke passing through the tobacco would render the latter part of the pipe foul and fetid. Even with the bowl of an ordinary size, the last of the pipeful is not so good as its commencement. The larger bowl would also make the pipe too heavy; a pipe-bowl must be of thick porous wood or clay. Besides, the prolonged smoking would render the bowl too hot. A pipe that would give a man a sufficiency of smoke, of regular and invariable sweetness and coolness, would be perfect; there is not, and there never can be, such a pipe. No one can make the ideal pipe, but it is possible to imagine it. It smokes for two hours without re-filling, and it is good all the time. It never needs a brush or string to be drawn through its mouth-piece. It cakes a little inside the bowl, but only a little—enough to give it a friendly, used appearance, but not enough to require that hideous operation for the excision of cake to be performed with a pocket-knife. It never breaks or cracks, and it cannot be left behind in a railway carriage. It is not a patent. No patent pipes are good for anything. Their anatomy is so complicated that a diagram is sold with them. You have to unscrew things, and take out cylinders, and put in wads. There is no sort of restfulness about a patent pipe. The ideal pipe would not look clever or perplex people in any way. But it is of no use talking about it. We shall probably go on smoking as well as we can, and as much as we can; and even at the best, how far we shall be from perfection?

"'AND THIS IS YANKELE BEN YITZCHOK,' ADDED MANASSEH."

The King of Schnorrers.

By I. Zangwill.

Illustrations by G. Hutchinson.

II.

Shewing how the King reigned.

WHEN Joseph Grobstock, philanthropist, realised that he had been turned into a fish-porter to Manasseh Bueno Barzillai Azevedo da Costa, beggar, he hastened up the steps so as to be at the *Schnorrer's* side when the door opened.

The livery-servant was visibly taken aback by the spectacle of their juxtaposition.

"This salmon to the cook!" cried Grobstock desperately, handing him the bag.

Da Costa looked thunders, and was about to speak, but Grobstock's eye sought his in frantic appeal. "Wait a minute; I will settle with you," he cried, congratulating himself on a phrase that would carry another meaning to Wilkinson's ears. He drew a breath of relief when the flunkey disappeared, and left them standing in the spacious hall with its statues and plants.

"Is this the way you steal my salmon, after all?" demanded da Costa hotly.

"Hush, hush! I didn't mean to steal it! I will pay you for it!"

"I refuse to sell! You coveted it from the first—you have broken the Tenth Commandment, even as these stone figures violate the Second. Your invitation to me to accompany you here at once was a mere trick. Now I understand why you were so eager."

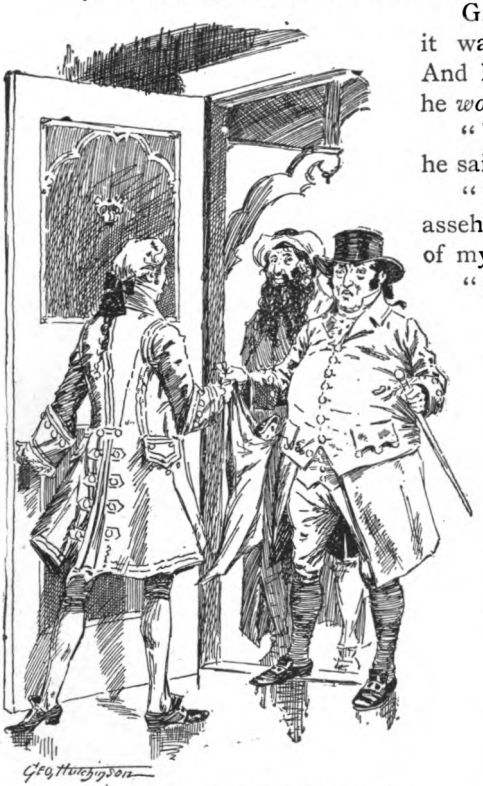
"No, no, da Costa. Seeing that you placed the fish in my hands, I had no option but to give it to Wilkinson, because—because——" Grobstock would have had some difficulty in explaining, but Manasseh saved him the pain.

"You had to give *my* fish to Wilkinson!" he interrupted. "Sir, I thought you were a fine man, a man of honour. I admit that I placed my fish in your hands. But because I had no hesitation in allowing you to carry it, this is how you repay my confidence!"

In the whirl of his thoughts Grobstock grasped at the word "repay" as a swimmer in a whirlpool grasps at a straw.

"I will repay your money!" he cried. "Here are your two guineas. You will get another salmon, and more cheaply. As you pointed out, you could have got this for twenty-five shillings."

"Two guineas!" ejaculated Manasseh contemptuously. "Why you offered Jonathan, the fishmonger, three!"



"'THIS SALMON TO THE COOK!'"

Grobstock was astounded, but it was beneath him to bargain. And he remembered that, after all, he *would* enjoy the salmon.

"Well, here are three guineas," he said pacifically, offering them.

"Three guineas!" echoed Manasseh, spurning them. "And what of my profit?"

"Profit!" gasped Grobstock.

"Since you have made me a middle-man, since you have forced me into the fish-trade, I must have my profits like anybody else."

"Here is a crown extra!"

"And my compensation?"

"What do you mean?" enquired Grobstock, exasperated. "Compensation for what?"

"For what? For two things at the very least," Manasseh said unswervingly. "In the first place," and as he began his logically-divided reply his tone assumed the sing-song sacred to Talmudical dialectics, "compensation for not eating the salmon myself. For it is not as if I offered it you—I merely entrusted it to you, and it is ordained in Exodus that if a man shall deliver unto his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast to keep, then for every matter of trespass, whether it be for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing, the

man shall receive double, and therefore you should pay me six guineas. And secondly——'

"Not another farthing!" spluttered Grobstock, red as a turkey-cock.

"Very well," said the *Schnorrer* imperturbably, and, lifting up his voice, he called "Wilkinson!"

"Hush!" commanded Grobstock. "What are you doing?"

"I will tell Wilkinson to bring back my property."

"Wilkinson will not obey you."

"Not obey *me!* A servant! Why he is not even black! All the Sephardim I visit have black pages—much grander than Wilkinson—and they tremble at my nod. At Baron D'Aguilar's mansion in Broad Street Buildings there is a retinue of twenty-four servants, and they——"

"And what is your second claim?"

"Compensation for being degraded to fishmongering. I am not of those who sell things in the streets. I am a son of the Law, a student of the Talmud."

"If a crown piece will satisfy each of these claims——"

"I am not a blood-sucker—as it is said in the Talmud, Tractate Passover, 'God loves the man who gives not way to wrath nor drunkenness, nor stickles for his rights'—that makes altogether three guineas and three crowns."

"Yes. Here they are."

Wilkinson reappeared. "You called me, sir?" he said. "No, *I* called you," said Manasseh, "I wished to give you a crown."

And he handed him one of the three. Wilkinson took it, stupefied, and retired.

"Did I not get rid of him cleverly?" said Manasseh. "You see how he obeys me!"

"Ye-es."

"I shall not ask you for more than the bare crown I gave him to save your honour."

"To save my honour!"

"Would you have had me tell him the real reason I called him was that his master was a thief? No, sir, I was careful not to shed your blood in public, though you had no such care for mine."

"Here is the crown!" said Grobstock savagely. "Nay, here are three!" He turned out his breeches-pockets to exhibit their absolute nudity,

"No, no," said Manasseh mildly, "I shall take but two. You had best keep the other—you may want a little silver." He pressed it into the magnate's hand.

"You should not be so extravagant in future," he added in kindly reproach. "It is bad to be left with nothing in one's pocket—I know the feeling, and can sympathise with you." Grobstock stood speechless, clasping the crown of charity.

"GROBSTOCK RUMMAGED AMONG THEM."

Standing thus at the hall door, he had the air of Wilkinson, surprised by a too generous vail.

Da Costa cut short the crisis by offering his host a pinch from the jewel-crusted snuff-box. Grobstock greedily took the whole box, the beggar resigning it to him without protest. In his gratitude for this unexpected favour, Grobstock pocketed the silver insult without further ado, and led the way towards the second-hand clothes. He walked gingerly, so as not to awaken his wife, who was a great amateur of the siesta, and might issue suddenly from her apartment like a spider, but Manasseh stolidly thumped on the stairs with his staff. Happily the carpet was thick.

The clothes hung in a mahogany wardrobe with a plate-glass front in Grobstock's elegantly appointed bedchamber.

Grobstock rummaged among them while Manasseh, parting the white Persian curtains lined with pale pink, gazed out of the window towards the Tenterground that stretched in the rear of the mansion. Leaning on his staff, he watched the couples promenading among the sunlit parterres and amid the shubberies, in the cool freshness of declining day. Here and there the vivid face of a dark-eyed beauty gleamed like a passion-flower. Manasseh surveyed the scene with bland benevolence; at peace with God and man.

He did not deign to bestow a glance upon the garments till Grobstock observed: "There! I think that's all I can spare." Then he turned leisurely and regarded—with the same benign aspect—the litter Grobstock had spread upon the bed—a medley of articles in excellent condition, gorgeous neckerchiefs piled in three-cornered hats, and buckled shoes trampling on white waistcoats. But his eye had scarcely rested on them a quarter of a minute when a sudden flash came into it, and a spasm crossed his face.

"Excuse me!" he cried, and hastened towards the door.

"What's the matter?" exclaimed Grobstock in astonished apprehension. Was his gift to be flouted thus?

"I'll be back in a moment," said Manasseh, and hurried down the stairs.

Relieved on one point, Grobstock was still full of vague alarms. He ran out on the landing. "What do you want?" he called down as loudly as he dared.

"My money!" said Manasseh.

Imagining that the *Schnorrer* had left the proceeds of the sale of the salmon in the hall, Joseph Grobstock returned to his room, and occupied himself half-mechanically in sorting the garments he had thrown higgledy-piggledy upon the bed. In so doing he espied amid the heap a pair of pantaloons entirely new and unworn which he had carelessly thrown in. It was while replacing this in the wardrobe that he heard sounds of objurgation. The cook's voice—Hibernian and high-pitched—travelled unmistakably to his ears, and brought fresh trepidation to his heart. He repaired to the landing again, and craned his neck over the balustrade. Happily the sounds were evanescent; in another minute Manasseh's head reappeared, mounting. When his left hand came in sight, Grobstock perceived it was grasping the lucky-bag with which a certain philanthropist had started out so joyously that afternoon. The unlucky-bag he felt inclined to dub it now.

"I have recovered it!" observed the *Schnorrer* cheerfully. "As it is written, 'And David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken.' You see in the excitement of the moment I did not notice that you had stolen my packets of silver as well as my salmon. Luckily your cook had not yet removed the fish from the bag—I chid her all the same for neglecting to put it into water, and she opened her mouth not in wisdom. If she had not been a heathen I should have suspected her of trickery, for I knew

nothing of the amount of money in the bag, saving your assurance that it did not fall below seventeen shillings, and it would have been easy for her to replace the fish. Therefore, in the words of David, will I give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, among the heathen."

The mental vision of the irruption of Manasseh into the kitchen was not pleasant to Grobstock. However, he only murmured: "How came you to think of it so suddenly?"

"Looking at your clothes reminded me. I was wondering if you had left anything in the pockets."

The donor started—he knew himself a careless rascal—and made as if he would overhaul his garments. The glitter in Manasseh's eye petrified him.

"Do you—do you—mind my looking?" he stammered apologetically.

"Am I a dog?" quoted the *Schnorrer* with dignity. "Am I a thief that you should go over my pockets? If, when I get home," he conceded, commencing to draw distinctions with his thumb, "I should find anything in my pockets that is of no value to anybody but you, do you fear I will not return it? If, on the other hand, I find anything that is of value to me, do you fear I will not keep it?"

"No, but—but——" Grobstock broke down, scarcely grasping the argumentation despite his own clarity of financial insight; he only felt vaguely that the *Schnorrer* was—professionally enough—begging the question.

"But what?" enquired Manasseh. "Surely you need not me to teach you your duty. You cannot be ignorant of the Law of Moses on the point."

"The Law of Moses says nothing on the point!"

"Indeed! What says Deuteronomy? 'When thou reapest thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.' Is it not further forbidden to go over the boughs of thy olive-tree again, or to gather the fallen fruit of thy vineyard? You will admit that Moses would have added a prohibition against searching minutely the pockets of cast-off garments, were it not that for forty years our ancestors had to wander in the wilderness in the same clothes, which miraculously waxed with their growth. No, I feel sure you will respect the spirit of the law, for when I went down into your kitchen and examined the door-post to see if you had nailed up a *mezuzah* upon it, knowing that many Jews only flaunt *mezuzahs* on door-posts visible to visitors, it rejoiced me to find one below stairs."

Grobstock's magnanimity responded to the appeal. It would be indeed petty to scrutinise his pockets, or to feel the linings for odd coins. After all he had Manasseh's promise to restore papers and everything of no value.

"Well, well," he said pleasantly, consoled by the thought his troubles had now come to an end—for that day at least—"take them away as they are."

"It is all very well to say take them away," replied Manasseh, with a touch of resentment, "but what am I to take them in?"

"Oh—ah—yes! There must be a sack somewhere——"

"And do you think I would carry them away in a sack? Would you have me look like an old clo' man? I must have a box. I see several in the box-room."

"Very well," said Grobstock resignedly. "If there's an empty one you may have it."

Manasseh laid his stick on the dressing-table and carefully examined the boxes, some of which were carelessly open, while every lock had a key sticking in it. They had travelled far and wide with Grobstock, who invariably combined pleasure with business.

"There is none quite empty," announced the *Schnorrer*, "but in this one there are only a few trifles—a pair of galligaskins and such like—so that if you make me a present of them the box *will* be empty, so far as you are concerned."

"All right," said Grobstock, and actually laughed. The nearer the departure of the *Schnorrer*, the higher his spirits rose.

Manasseh dragged the box towards the bed, and then for the first time since his return from the under-regions, surveyed the medley of garments upon it.

The light-hearted philanthropist, watching his face, saw it instantly change to darkness, like a tropical landscape. His own face grew white. The *Schnorrer* uttered an inarticulate cry, and turned a strange, questioning glance upon his patron.

"What is it now?" faltered Grobstock.

"I miss a pair of pantaloons!"

Grobstock grew whiter. "Nonsense! nonsense!" he muttered.

"I—miss—a—pair—of—pantaloons!" reiterated the *Schnorrer* deliberately.

"Oh, no—you have all I can spare there," said Grobstock uneasily. The *Schnorrer* hastily turned over the heap.

Then his eye flashed fire; he banged his fist on the dressing-table to accompany each *staccato* syllable.

"I—miss—a—pair—of—pan—ta—loons!" he shrieked.

The weak and ductile donor had a bad quarter of a minute.

"Perhaps," he stammered at last, "you—m—mean—the new pair I found had got accidentally mixed up with them."

"Of course I mean the new pair! And so you took them away! Just because I wasn't looking. I left the room, thinking I had to do with a man of honour. If you had taken an old pair I shouldn't have minded so much; but to rob a poor man of his brand-new breeches!"

"MANASSEH CAREFULLY EXAMINED THE BOXES."

"I must have them," cried Grobstock irascibly. "I have to go to a reception to-morrow, and they are the only pair I shall have to wear. You see I——"

"Oh, very well," interrupted the *Schnorrer*, in low, indifferent tones.

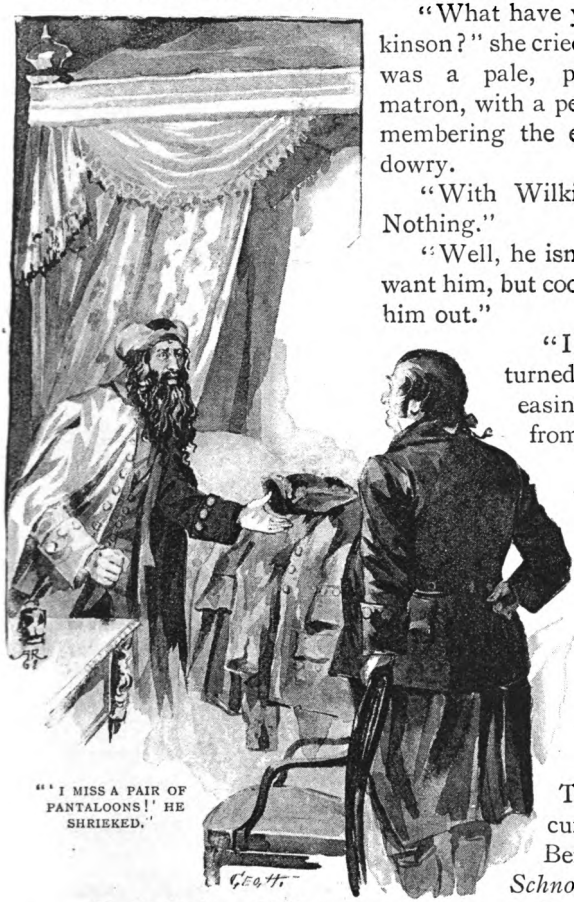
After that there was a dead silence. The *Schnorrer* majestically folded some silk stockings and laid them in the box. Upon them he packed other garments in stern, sorrowful *hauteur*. Grobstock's soul began to tingle with pricks of compunction. Da Costa completed his task, but could not shut the overcrowded box. Grobstock silently seated his weighty person upon the lid. Manasseh neither resented nor welcomed him. When he had turned the key he mutely tilted the sitter off the box and shouldered it with consummate ease. Then he took his staff and strode from the room. Grobstock would have followed him, but the *Schnorrer* waved him back.

"On Friday, then," the conscience-stricken magnate said feebly.

Manasseh did not reply; he slammed the door instead, shutting in the master of the house.

Grobstock fell back on the bed exhausted, looking not unlike the tumbled litter of clothes he replaced. In a minute or two he raised himself and went to the window, and stood watching the

sun set behind the limes of the Tenterground. "At any rate I've done with him," he said, and hummed a tune. The sudden bursting open of the door froze it upon his lips. He was almost relieved to find the intruder was only his wife.



"'I MISS A PAIR OF PANTALOONS!' HE SHRIEKED."

"What have you done with Wilkinson?" she cried vehemently. She was a pale, puffy-faced, portly matron, with a permanent air of remembering the exact figure of her dowry.

"With Wilkinson, my dear? Nothing."

"Well, he isn't in the house. I want him, but cook says you've sent him out."

"I? Oh, no," he returned, with dawning uneasiness, looking away from her sceptical gaze. Suddenly his pupils dilated. A picture from without had painted itself on his retina. It was a picture of Wilkinson — Wilkinson the austere, Wilkinson the unbending — treading the Tenterground gravel, curved beneath a box! Before him strode the *Schnorrer*.

Never during all his tenure of service in Goodman's Fields had Wilkinson carried anything on his shoulders but his livery. Grobstock would have as soon dreamt of his wife consenting to wear cotton. He rubbed his eyes, but the image persisted.

He clutched at the window curtains to steady himself.

"My Persian curtains!" cried his wife. "What is the matter with you?"

"He must be the Baal Shem himself!" gasped Grobstock unheeding.

"What is it? What are you looking at?"

"N—nothing."

Mrs. Grobstock incredulously approached the window and stared through the panes. She saw Wilkinson in the gardens, but did not recognise him in his new attitude. She concluded that her husband's agitation must have some connection with a beautiful brunette who was tasting the cool of the evening in a sedan chair, and it was with a touch of asperity that she said: "Cook complains of being insulted by a saucy fellow who brought home your fish."

"Oh!' said poor Grobstock. Was he never to be done with the man?

"How came you to send him to her?"

His anger against Manasseh resurged under his wife's peevishness.

"My dear," he cried, "I did not send him anywhere—except to the devil."

"Joseph! You might keep such language for the ears of creatures in sedan chairs."

And Mrs. Grobstock flounced out of the room with a rustle of angry satin.

When Wilkinson reappeared, limp and tired, with his pompousness exuded in perspiration, he sought his master with a message, which he delivered ere the flood of interrogation could burst from Grobstock's lips.

"Mr. da Costa presents his compliments, and says that he has decided on reconsideration not to break his promise to be with you on Friday evening."

"Oh, indeed!" said Grobstock grimly. "And, pray, how came you to carry his box?"

"You told me to, sir!"

"*I* told you!"

"I mean he told me you told me to," said Wilkinson wonderingly. "Didn't you?"

Grobstock hesitated. Since Manasseh *would* be his guest, was it not imprudent to give him away to the livery-servant? Besides, he felt a secret pleasure in Wilkinson's humiliation—but for the *Schnorrer* he would never have known that Wilkinson's gold lace concealed a pliable personality. The proverb "Like master like man" did not occur to Grobstock at this juncture.

"I only meant you to carry it to a coach," he murmured.

"He said it was not worth while—the distance was so short."

"Ah! Did you see his house?" enquired Grobstock curiously.

"Yes; a very fine house in Aldgate, with a handsome portico and two stone lions."

Grobstock strove hard not to look surprised.

"I handed the box to the footman."

Grobstock strove harder.

Wilkinson ended with a weak smile: "Would you believe, sir, I thought at first he brought home your fish! He dresses so peculiarly. He must be an original."

"Yes, yes; an eccentric like Baron D'Aguilar, whom he visits," said Grobstock eagerly. He wondered, indeed, whether he was not speaking the truth. Could he have been the victim of a practical joke, a prank? Did not a natural aristocracy ooze from every pore of his mysterious visitor? Was not every tone, every gesture, that of a man born to rule? "You must remember, too," he added, "that he is a Spaniard."

"TILTED THE SITTER OFF THE BOX."

"Ah, I see," said Wilkinson in profound accents.

"I daresay he dresses like everybody else, though, when he dines or sups out," Grobstock added lightly. "I only brought him in by accident. But go to your mistress! She wants you."

"Yes, sir. Oh, by the way, I forgot to tell you he hopes you will save him a slice of his salmon."

"Go to your mistress!"

"You did not tell me a Spanish nobleman was coming to us on Friday," said his spouse later in the evening.

"No," he admitted curtly.

"But is he?"

"No—at least, not a nobleman.'

"What then? I have to learn about my guests from my servants."

"Apparently."

"Oh! and you think that's right."

"To gossip with your servants? Certainly not."

"If my husband will not tell me anything—if he has only eyes for sedan chairs."

Joseph thought it best to kiss Mrs. Grobstock.

"A fellow-Director, I suppose?" she urged, more mildly.

"A fellow-Israelite. He has promised to come at six."

Manasseh was punctual to the second. Wilkinson ushered him in. The hostess had robed herself in her best to do honour to a situation which her husband awaited with what hope he could. She looked radiant in a gown of blue silk; her hair was done in a tuft and round her neck was an "esclavage," consisting of festoons of gold chains. The Sabbath table was equally festive with its ponderous silver candelabra, coffee-urn, and consecration cup, its flower-vases, and fruit-salvers. The dining-room itself was a handsome apartment; its buffets glittered with Venetian glass and Dresden porcelain, and here and there gilt pedestals supported globes of gold and silver fish.

At the first glance at his guest Grobstock's blood ran cold.

Manasseh had not turned a hair, nor changed a single garment. At the second glance Grobstock's blood boiled. A second figure loomed in Manasseh's wake—a short *Schnorrer*, even dingier than da Costa, and with none of his dignity, a clumsy, stooping *Schnorrer*, with a cajoling grin on his mud-coloured, hairy face. Neither removed his headgear.

Mrs. Grobstock remained glued to her chair in astonishment.

"Peace be unto you," said the King of *Schnorrers*, "I have brought with me my friend Yankele ben Yitzchok of whom I told you."

Yankele nodded, grinning harder than ever.

"You never told me he was coming," Grobstock rejoined, with an apoplectic air.

"Did I not tell you he always supped with me on Friday evenings?" Manasseh reminded him quietly. "It is so good of him to accompany me even here—he will make the necessary third at grace."

The host took a frantic surreptitious glance at his wife. It was evident that her brain was in a whirl, the evidence of her senses conflicting with vague doubts of the possibilities of Spanish grandeeism and with a lingering belief in her husband's sanity.

Grobstock resolved to snatch the benefit of her doubts. "My dear," said he, "this is Mr. da Costa."

"Manasseh Bueno Barzillai Azevedo da Costa," said the *Schnorrer*.

The dame seemed a whit startled and impressed. She bowed, but words of welcome were still congealed in her throat.

"And this is Yankele ben Yitzchok," added Manasseh. "A poor friend of mine. I do not doubt, Mrs. Grobstock, that as a pious woman, the daughter of Moses Bernberg (his memory for a blessing), you prefer grace with three."

"Any friend of yours is welcome!" She found her lips murmuring the conventional phrase without being able to check their output.

"I never doubted that either," said Manasseh gracefully. "Is not the hospitality of Moses Bernberg's beautiful daughter a proverb?"

"THOUGHT IT BEST TO KISS MRS. GROBSTOCK."

Moses Bernberg's daughter could not deny this; her salon was the rendezvous of rich bagmen, brokers and bankers, tempered by occasional young bloods and old bucks not of the Jewish faith (nor any other). But she had never before encountered a personage so magnificently shabby, nor extended her proverbial hospitality to a Polish *Schnorrer* uncompromisingly musty. Joseph did not dare meet her eye.

"Sit down there, Yankele," he said hurriedly, in ghastly genial accents, and he indicated a chair at the farthest possible point from the hostess. He placed Manasseh next to his Polish parasite, and seated himself as a buffer between his guests and his wife. He was burning with inward indignation at the futile rifling of his wardrobe, but he dared not say anything in the hearing of his spouse.

"It is a beautiful custom, this of the Sabbath guest, is it not, Mrs. Grobstock?" remarked the King as he seated himself on his throne. "I never neglect it—even when I go out to the Sabbath-meal as to-night."

The late Miss Bernberg was suddenly reminded of auld lang syne: her father (who according to a wag of the period had divided his time between the Law and the profits) having been a depositary of ancient tradition. Perhaps these obsolescent customs, unsuited to prosperous times, had lingered longer among the Spanish grandees. She seized an early opportunity, when the Sephardic *Schnorrer* was taking his coffee from Wilkinson, of putting the question to her husband, who fell in weakly with her illusions. He knew there was no danger of Manasseh's beggarly status leaking out; no expressions of gratitude were likely to fall from that gentleman's lips. He even hinted that da Costa dressed so fustily to keep his poor friend in countenance. Nevertheless, Mrs. Grobstock, while not without admiration for the Quixotism, was not without resentment for being dragged into it. She felt that such charity should begin and end at home.

"I see you did save me a slice of salmon," said Manasseh, manipulating his fish.

"What salmon was that?" asked the hostess, pricking up her ears.

"One I had from Mr. da Costa on Wednesday," said the host.

"Oh, that! It was delicious. I am sure it was very kind of you, Mr. da Costa, to make us such a nice present," said the hostess, her resentment diminishing. "We had company last night, and everybody praised it till none was left. This is another, but I hope it is to your liking," she finished anxiously.

"Yes, it's very fair, very fair, indeed. I don't know when I've tasted better, except at the house of the President of the *Deputados*. But Yankele here is a connoisseur in fish, not easy to please. What say you, Yankele?"

Yankele munched a muffled approval.

"Help yourself to more bread and butter, Yankele," said Manasseh. "Make yourself at home—remember you're my guest." Silently he added: "The other fork!"

Grobstock's irritation found vent in a complaint that the salad wanted vinegar.

"How can you say so? It's perfect," said Mrs. Grobstock. "Salad is cook's speciality."

Manasseh tasted it critically. "On salads you must come to me," he said. "It does not want vinegar," was his verdict; "but a little more oil would certainly improve it. Oh, there is no one dresses salad like Hyman!"

Hyman's fame as the *Kosher chef* who superintended the big

dinners at the London Tavern had reached Mrs. Grobstock's ears, and she was proportionately impressed.

"They say his pastry is so good," she observed, to be in the running.

"Yes," said the *Schnorrer*, "in kneading and puffing he stands alone."

"Our cook's tarts are quite as nice, said Grobstock roughly.

"We shall see," Manasseh replied guardedly. "Though, as for almond-cakes, Hyman himself makes none better than I get from my cousin, Barzillai of Fenchurch Street."

"Your cousin!" exclaimed Grobstock, "the West Indian merchant!"

"The same—formerly of Barbadoes. Still, your cook knows how to make coffee, though I can tell you do not get it direct from the plantation like the wardens of my Synagogue."

Grobstock was once again piqued with curiosity as to the *Schnorrer's* identity.

"You accuse me of having stone figures in my house," he said boldly, "but what about the lions in front of yours?"

"I have no lions,' said Manasseh.

"Wilkinson told me so. Didn't you, Wilkinson?"

"Wilkinson is a slanderer. That was the house of Nathaniel Furtado."

Grobstock began to choke with chagrin. He perceived at once that the *Schnorrer* had merely had the clothes conveyed direct to the house of a wealthy private dealer.

"Take care!" exclaimed the *Schnorrer* anxiously, "you are spluttering sauce all over that waistcoat, without any consideration for me."

Joseph suppressed himself with an effort. Open discussion would betray matters to is wife, and he was now too deeply enmeshed in falsehoods by default. But he managed to whisper angrily, "Why did you tell Wilkinson I ordered him to carry your box?"

"To save your credit in his eyes. How was he to know we had quarrelled? He would have thought you discourteous to your guest."

"That's all very fine. But why did you sell my clothes?"

"You did not expect me to wear them? No, I know my station, thank God."

"What is that you are saying, Mr. da Costa?" asked the hostess,

"Oh, we are talking of Dan Mendoza," replied Grobstock glibly; "wondering if he'll beat Dick Humphreys at Doncaster."

"Oh, Joseph, didn't you have enough of Dan Mendoza at supper last night?" protested his wife.

"It is not a subject *I* ever talk about," said the *Schnorrer*, fixing his host with a reproachful glance.

Grobstock desperately touched his foot under the table, knowing he was selling his soul to the King of *Schnorrers*, but too flaccid to face the moment.

"No, da Costa doesn't usually. Only Dan Mendoza being a Spaniard I happened to ask if he was ever seen in the Synagogue."

"If I had my way," growled da Costa, "he should be excommunicated—a bruiser, a defacer of God's image!"

"By gad, no!" cried Grobstock, stirred up. "If you had seen him lick the Badger in thirty-five minutes on a twenty-four foot stage——"

"Joseph! Joseph! Remember it is the Sabbath!" cried Mrs. Grobstock.

"I would willingly exchange our Dan Mendoza for your David Levi," said da Costa severely.

David Levi was the literary ornament of the Ghetto; a shoemaker and hat-dresser who cultivated Hebrew philology and the Muses, and broke a lance in defence of his creed with Dr. Priestley, the discoverer of Oxygen, and Tom Paine, the discoverer of Reason.

"Pshaw! David Levi! The mad hatter!" cried Grobstock. He makes nothing at all out of his books."

"You should subscribe for more copies."

"I would if you wrote them," said Grobstock, with a grimace.

"I got six copies of his *Lingua Sacra*," said the *Schnorrer*, "and a dozen of his translation of the Pentateuch."

"You can afford it!" snarled Grobstock, with grim humour. "I have to earn my money."

"It is very good of Mr. da Costa, all the same, interposed the hostess. "How many men, born to great possessions, remain quite indifferent to learning!"

"True, most true," said the *Schnorrer*. "Men-of-the-Earth, most of them."

After supper the *Schnorrer* trolled the Hebrew grace hilariously, and ere he left he said to the hostess, "May the Lord bless you with children!"

"Thank you," she answered, much moved.

"You see I should be so pleased to marry your daughter."

"You are very complimentary," she murmured, but her husband's exclamation drowned hers, "You marry my daughter!"

"Who else moves among better circles—is more easily able to find her a suitable match?"

"Oh, in *that* sense," said Grobstock, mollified in one direction, irritated in another.

"In what other sense? You do not think I, a Sephardi, would marry her myself!"

"My daughter does not need your assistance," replied Grobstock shortly.

"Not yet," admitted Manasseh, rising to go; "but when the time comes, where will you find a better marriage broker? I have had a finger in the marriage of greater men's daughters. You see, when I recommend a maiden or a young man it is from no surface knowledge. I have seen them in the intimacy of their homes—above all I am able to say whether they are of a good, charitable disposition. Good Sabbath!"

"Good Sabbath," murmured the host and hostess in farewell. Mrs. Grobstock thought he need not be above shaking hands, for all his grand acquaintances.

"This way, Yankele," said Manasseh, showing him to the door. "I am so glad you were able to come—you must come again."

(To be continued.)

ERNEST M. JESSOP. 1893.

Royal Pets.

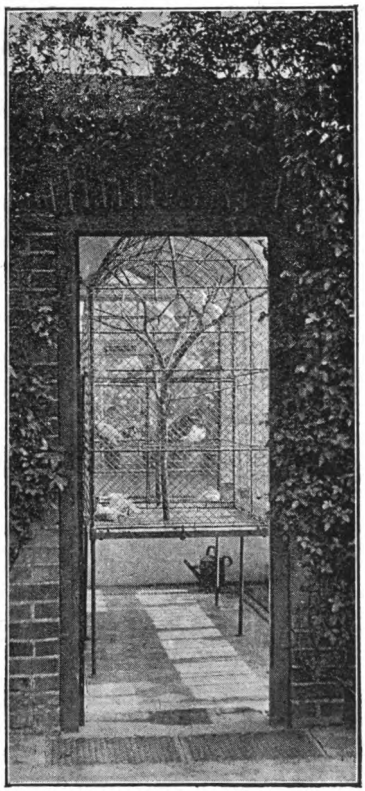
No. III.—THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES'S PETS AT SANDRINGHAM.

By Ernest M. Jessop.

Illustrations by the Writer.

(*Photographs by Ralph W. Robinson, of Redhill.*)

SAYING good-bye to Westover and Copeland, and thanking them for their kindness and courtesy, I pay a flying visit to the delightful little house now undergoing renovation and enlargement for the occupation of the Duke of York and his charming bride. It is pleasantly situated on the border of the lower lake, some few minutes' walk from the mansion, and is approached by a beautiful winding walk bordered with rare trees and shrubs. The house itself is not in the least pretentious, but its windows command some most lovely views. The rooms are mostly of a moderate size, and are being decorated with great good taste, the prevailing tones of colour being of the lightest, in fact nearly white. The high dado of the dining-room is a model of tasteful simplicity. The drawing-room when finished will be apparently of Louis Seize design, and has a very light, elegant ceiling. The main staircase and hall, although not large, are beautifully designed. The garden surrounding the house is connected with a pretty little islet in the lower lake by a rustic bridge formed of tree trunks and rough brown stone, and the islet is being made into a perfect bower by the addition of rocks, ferns and water plants. The whole of this work is being done by the workmen employed on the estate. Coming back across the park on the east side I cross

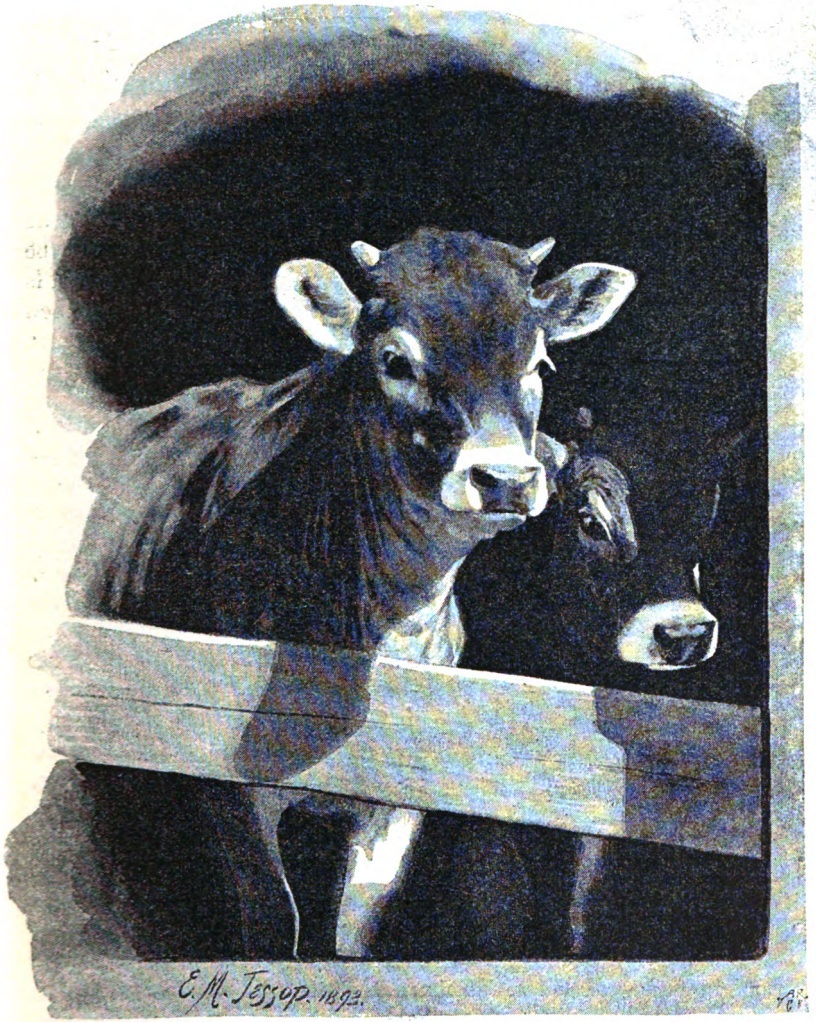


THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S AVIARY

a well-kept road, and arrive at the iron gates of the kitchen gardens. Here everything is in wonderfully well-ordered but simple style. Mention may also be made of the rows of apple trees trained in pyramids to a great height in the French manner, the lower branches being fastened to an iron hoop near the ground, while the upper ones are tied down one to another. The walls which enclose the gardens are covered in taking fashion with symmetrically arranged plum and pear trees; the plums are trained fan shape and the pears in horizontal lines. Following the long straight path through the gardens so often walked by their Royal mistress, I arrive at the Princess's own model dairy, a charming little rustic building almost overgrown with climbing plants. Here Mrs. Flegg, the dairywoman, first shows me the Royal dairy, a deliciously cool, lofty room of about twenty-one feet square, with a plain tiled floor, and a splendid high dado of rare old blue and white Indian figured tiles, which were specially sent to the Prince from India. On the tables which encircle the dairy thirty-two flat pans of rich-looking milk are cooling. As we enter the door we see a pretty little fountain, designed in the shape of a stork, surrounded by bulrushes, faced at the farther end over the triple window by the preserved head of "Jewess the Fourth," H.R.H.'s shorthorned heifer, the winner of the Champion prize at the Cattle Show of 1874. Beneath this grand head stands a late present from the Prince, in the shape of a beautiful bronze statuette of a Jersey champion bull, on a buff marble plinth. In front of this stands a replica of Focardi's well-known "You Dirty Boy." On the central two-tier white marble table are some handsome-coloured drinking-glasses, presents at Jubilee time from Homburg, some small ornaments in white china, spoons and cream ewers in silver, and also the Princess's own dainty little strawberry dish. This is of glazed white china, with the strawberry plant, in full colours and high relief, twined about the dish and handle. This quaint and quiet little dairy is a favourite place with all the family; hither especially come the young Princesses, laughingly remarking as they skim the cream off the pans for themselves, "We can get so much here, at home we are allowed so little." The Princesses are all expert butter-makers, and their Royal mother has a thorough technical knowledge of all matters connected with dairy work. She at once notices any defect in the products of the dairy, and suggests efficient remedies.

I pass now to the next, or "butter-room," which has walls entirely covered with plain blue glazed tiles and a matted floor.

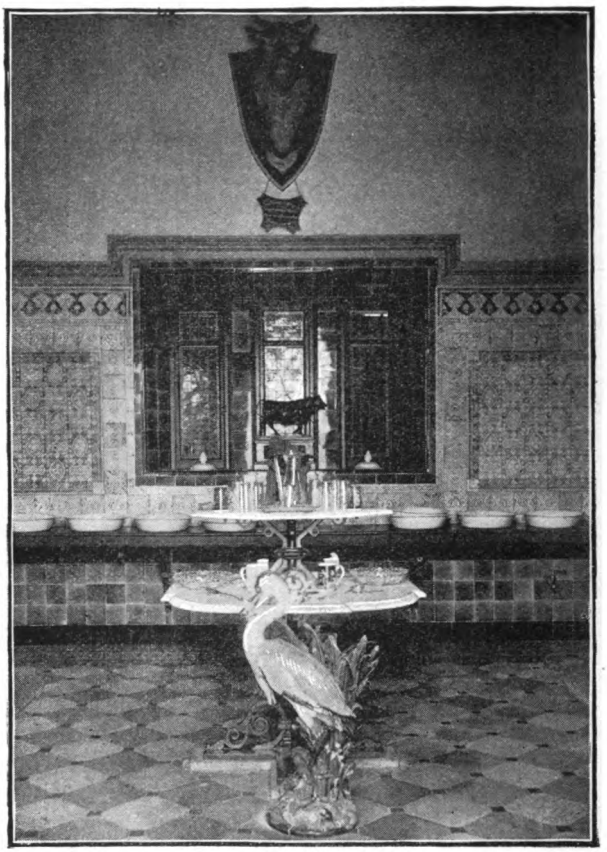
Across the window side of the room runs a shelf laden with a long procession of quaint brown glazed hares, bulls, Toby jugs, &c.; at the right hand corner stands a deliciously funny pair of china cats engaged in flirtation. Below these on the right wall



JERSEYS.

are four Jersey creamers, with which is made the "Devonshire" cream for winter use. Butter and cream cheese made here are always sent to the family during their absence. A consignment was just leaving for Marlborough House on my arrival.

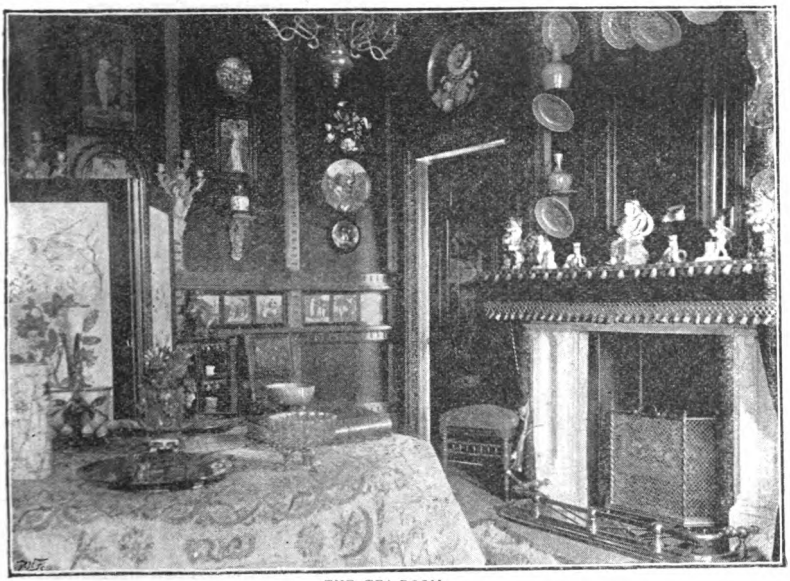
Her Majesty the Queen has been a frequent visitor to the dairy, and has always expressed her great satisfaction at its arrangements and management.



THE FOUNTAIN.

And now we come to the most favoured spot in all Sandringham ; this is the Princess's own tea-room. This room is as pretty a specimen of refined taste as could well be imagined. It is possibly fifteen feet square, with a large bay window at the sunny end. The floor is covered with felt carpet of a dull light bluish-green colour, over which lie some handsome skin rugs. The walls are divided into panels by light unpolished oak mouldings, relieved by narrow black lines. The panels are painted of a dull dead green background colour, and are almost covered with quaint and beautiful specimens of china, all presents from friends who have the rare privilege of the *entrée* here. A large circular plaque, painted with a charming portrait of the Princess in fancy dress as Queen Elizabeth, hangs over one entrance door, and this is faced by a similar one of the Prince as Henry the Eighth, over the opposite entrance. The centre panels of the oak doors are fitted with plaques, beautifully painted by Her Grace the Duchess

of Devonshire, in designs of Cupids and flowers. The handles of the doors are all of finely wrought iron. At about three feet from the floor runs a line of large painted tiles. Every one contains a different figure subject. These were all painted and presented to Her Royal Highness by personal friends. The plain, but well-designed, white marble chimney-piece is surmounted by a bevelled edge mirror, in a heavy ebony frame, this again is surrounded by rich plain glazed blue china plates and dishes. In the centre of

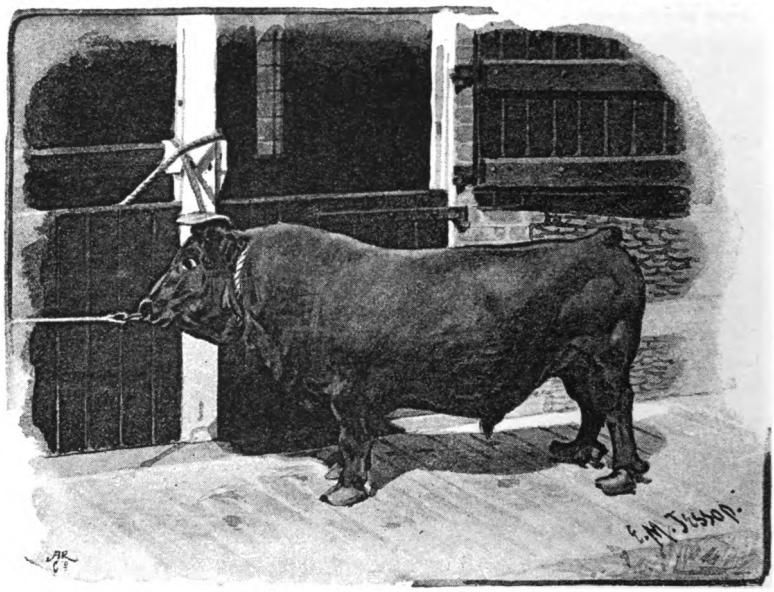


THE TEA-ROOM.

the plain white ceiling hangs a wrought brass candelabrum of most artistic design, which was brought by the Princess from Denmark. No gas or other illuminant but candles is allowed in this charming room.

The furniture is made of plain light oak, upholstered in a small pattern damask. Among other pieces I noticed a corner cabinet, containing a quaint, very old tea service, the cups, which are especially odd-looking, being made without handles. On one of the shelves of a small whatnot stands the afternoon tea set, presented by Her Majesty the Queen; it is of white glazed china, splendidly painted with orchids and views of Balmoral and Windsor. Then I notice the large round table covered with a hand-embroidered Indian cover, and bearing some more

china, and an album of dried New Zealand ferns. The four-fold screen which partly encloses this table is painted with birds and flowers, and has an ebony frame. The hangings and curtains of the room are all of a neat design in dull green and yellow tapestry. At the side of the chimney-piece hangs a Swiss cuckoo clock. To this sweet little retreat come every day, about four o'clock, on foot or by pony carriage, the Princess, her daughters, and



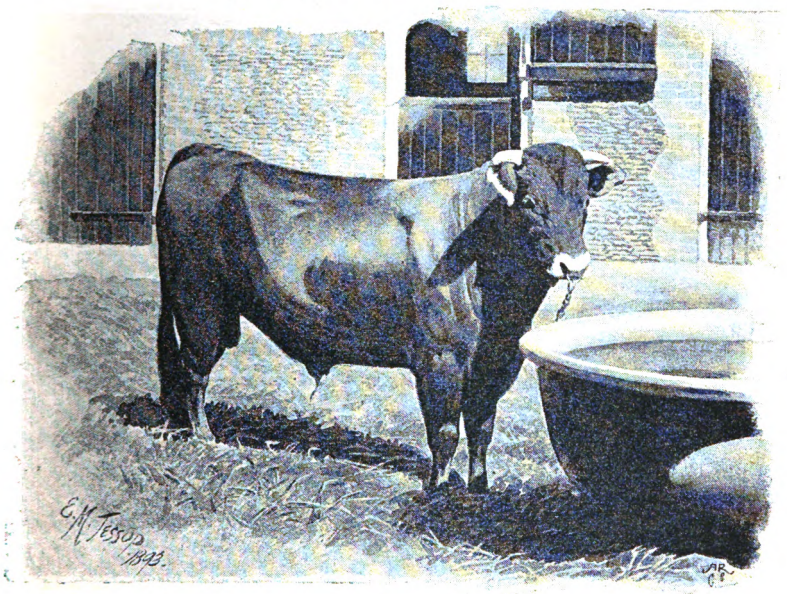
"MOONLIGHTER."

friends. The pleasantest and mostly-used road is the long, straight path through the fruit gardens. Should the Prince, by chance, as he sometimes does, arrive from any part of the estate before the Princess, he never enters this particular room until Her Royal Highness's arrival.

The strawberries having been sent from the adjacent garden, tea is usually served about 5.30 o'clock; however large a party, only one footman being used. The party rarely separates until it is time to dress for dinner at half-past seven o'clock.

A small corridor leads from the pretty room by a door known as the Princess's to some rustic seats under a verandah facing a small flower garden. These are much used by the Royal party in summer weather. From here I cross the garden and road to a square of small cowhouses with a central courtyard. The first pet,

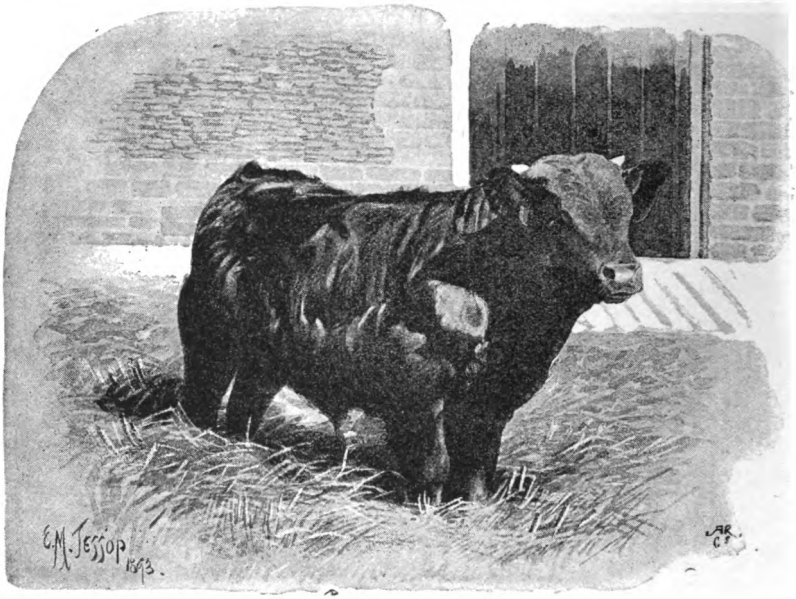
produced by the aid of some five assistants attached by ropes to various portions of his person, is a small black Dexter Kerry bull. "This is 'Moonlighter,' sir!" says a panting hanger-on, and nobly the little bull proceeds to vindicate his claim to the title, being at first perfectly irrepressible. When at length home rule prevails and peace is temporarily restored, another perspiring retainer remarks, "He is getting old now, sir!" But in spite of his objection to control, "Moonlighter" is a beautiful specimen of a fine breed, and sire to many prize-winners. He was bought by the Prince at the Royal Agricultural Show in Newcastle some years



"CUSH."

since. "Cush," a large, handsome fawn bull, of a much quieter disposition, is next shown. He has not been long here, and comes for breeding purposes, the improvement of various breeds of cattle being a constant study with the Prince. Then comes a very handsome small red Dexter Kerry bull calf not yet named. From his strong objection to control I should imagine he was a descendant of "Moonlighter." Now I am shown some truly beautiful Jersey cows, of which there are many on the premises. The dairy herd usually consists of twelve cows of the finest breeding and appearance; some of them, indeed, are perfect pictures. After duly admiring the herd, I start on a long drive to the next point

of interest. Again I pass the Norwich gates, so zealously guarded for the last twenty years by P.C. Middleton, whose London helmet and police uniform form an odd contrast to his rural surroundings, and, turning to the left, drive along a splendid wide road bordered by magnificent woods. Here again we are obstructed by the mobs of pheasants and rabbits. In connection with this I ought to mention the splendidly stocked coverts all over the estate, which are almost unequalled. In one spot the Duke of York made last season his famous bag of nine brace of woodcock, besides other game, before luncheon. Passing through

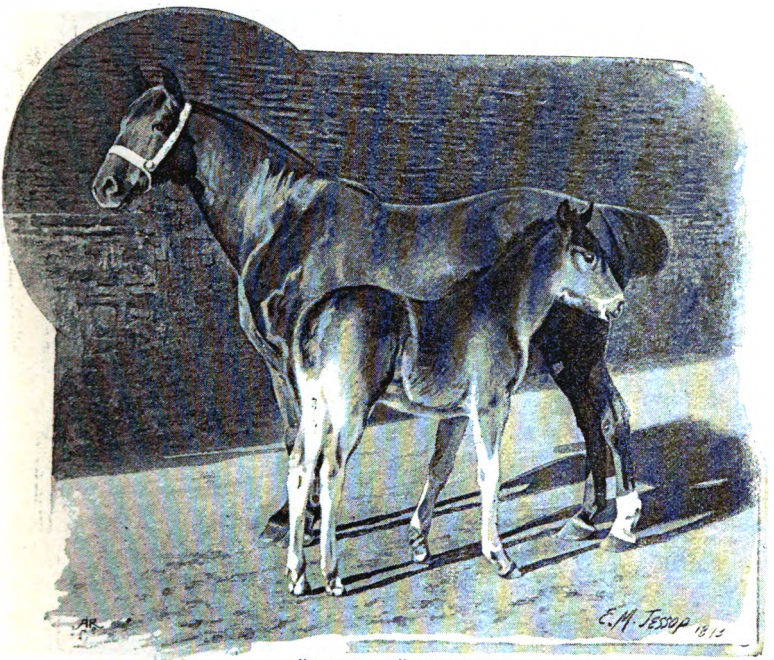


SON OF "MOONLIGHTER."

Wolferton, with its splendid church dating from the fourteenth century, we pull up at a compact set of farm buildings and an old-fashioned farmhouse. These form the entrance to the Hackney Stud Farm, which is in charge of Mr. Dickie, and under the still more able management of Sir Dighton Probyn, V.C., whose name, indeed, all over the estate is spoken of with love and respect second only to that expressed for the Royal master and mistress.

Mr. Dickie being for the moment absent, I am taken in charge by a very intelligent and obliging foreman, who first shows me something of the capitally-planned series of yards, loose boxes,

and stalls, every one duly numbered and lettered for easy reference. Here, in an eight-stall stable much resembling those at the great house, and filled with satin-skinned occupants, I notice a clever arrangement in roofing. This is, first, a wood lattice work, covered with a thatching of reeds, which is again surmounted by tiles. The effect of this arrangement is to give coolness in summer and warmth in winter.



"NEW YORK" AND FOAL.

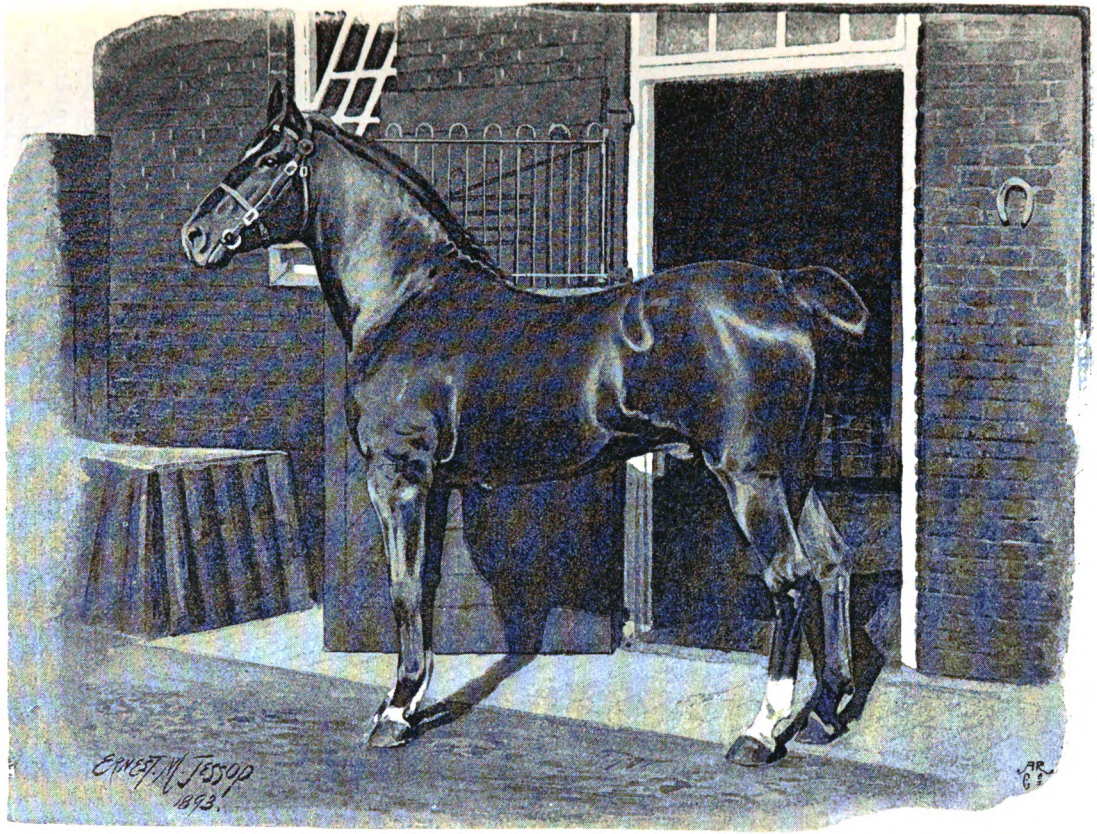
The farm itself consists of between six and seven hundred acres, and is beautifully arranged by nature and art for bringing up the young stock. Along a narrow road, bordered on either side with green pastures and groups of yards and fine trees for shade, we go to a small square enclosure with two loose boxes. From one of these issues the handsome stallion "Son of York," bred here by "Reality" out of "York." He is four years old, of a very rich dark chestnut colour, with a wonderful glossy sheen on his coat, and stands 15.3 in height—truly a magnificent animal, and a special favourite with the Prince. Somewhat reluctantly leaving such a grand picture, we next go to the neighbourhood of some outbuildings, where we are watched with great curiosity by

about twenty brood mares, each with her quaint-looking, long-legged foal playing about her. All of these are very young, and equally playful, some having such pretty bodies with inordinately long legs, that they have the appearance of being on stilts. As we stand admiring the little beauties, there comes quietly stepping down the dusty road "New York," who is a sister to "Son of York." She is a very handsome chestnut in colour, and has with her a beautiful lively foal by "Field Marshal," who was the Royal Agricultural Champion at the great Yorkshire Show, and winner of many other first prizes.

Incidentally I hear that there are usually about two hundred horses on the farm, and that sales are held every two years, the average prices realised being very high on account of the scarcity of horses combining so much blood with fine action. The next mare to be seen is "Rosebud," who is a very fine dark chestnut, and has with her a pretty foal by "Field Marshal." And now the justly admired of all spectators, "Wait a Bit," comes stepping so daintily on to the scene that his feet scarcely seem to touch the ground. As he lifts his beautiful head high in air at sight of the mares and foals, no handsomer creature could well be imagined. He is a pony stallion 14 hands in height, with a coat like the finest polished jet. But a detailed description of the beauties of the farm would want a volume to itself, and I have still the shire horses to see, and so wish the hackneys and mares good-bye. I have a short walk through the coach-house, with its double and single break, and the cart-shed, where it seems odd to read on the shaft of a farm cart, "H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, Sandringham, Norfolk," and then giving a longing look at the yet unvisited buildings clustered around, cross a pretty green and a few meadows to the "Wolferton Shire Stud Farm."

This, which is also a large farm, we can merely glance at. It usually contains nearly a hundred pedigree cart-horses of the finest breeding. Last year as many as fifty were sold from here, realising the (for this class of horse) wonderful average price of £113, a striking testimonial to the able management of the stud.

The first pet shown here is the largest and grandest looking I have yet seen on the estate. His name is "Colwich Topsman," a bay stallion with black mane. He has never yet been shown, but was bought last year from A. C. Duncombe, Esq., Ashbourne, Derbyshire, for five hundred guineas. As he stands, with lordly head and firm planted feet, with his towering form lit up by the rays of the setting sun, he looks indeed a cheap purchase. Then comes the handsome roan mare "Pride of Fleet," with her



"SON OF YORK."

foal by "Topsman," and last on my list, "Ursa Minor," a very dignified-looking bay stallion, only two years old. He was bred at Totnes, Devon, by Mr. Punchard, the great railway contractor. As I am admiring a pretty bridle of buff leather, with blue and steel mounts and white cord attached, which is specially used for showing the stallions, and am being criticised myself by a group of handsome brood mares, word is brought to me that some wonderful bulls are being fetched for my inspection.

A vision of "Moonlighter" instantly crosses my mind—this is enough; I take a hasty farewell, jump on the dog-cart, and soon put some miles between us.

"WAIT A BIT.'

Just a few statistics before visiting one of the workmen's clubs. Of pedigree shorthorns there are on the estate one hundred and fifty; the flock of Southdown sheep numbers three hundred ewes; and the fortnightly bill for wages alone amounts on the average to nearly six hundred pounds. There are no unemployed. If at any time ordinary work is slack, something fresh is undertaken so as to give employment to all. There is also an agent under Sir Dighton Probyn.

Away through the park, past the grand red deer, to the pretty red-roofed club. This was formerly known as West Newton House, and is a charming half-timbered house, surrounded by a

verandah supported by tree trunks. It is called the "Sandringham Club," and was established by the Prince of Wales for men and lads above the age of fourteen who are working on the Sandringham estate. The Prince has been graciously pleased to make over for the use of the club, at a nominal rent of £1 per annum, certain rooms in the house hitherto known as West Newton House. Rule 3 says: Members shall pay a subscription of 1s. per quarter, and honorary members not less than 10s. a year. One penny shall be charged for admittance for the evening only. Temperance drinks are supplied according to tariff at any time; smoking is allowed at all times, and everywhere excepting in the library. One pint of beer per day *only* can be obtained by any person.

THE CLUB.

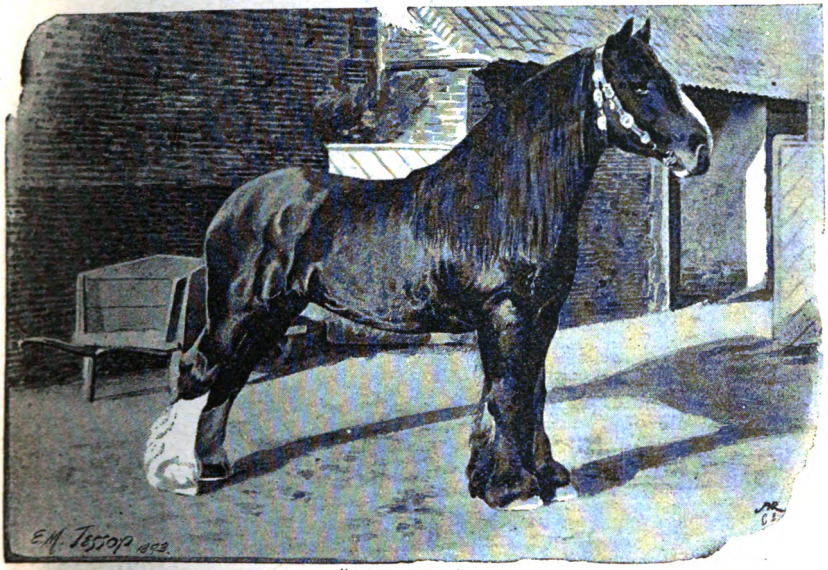
No wines or spirits to be drunk on the premises. Each member is allowed to introduce two friends, but they must not be residents on the estate. There are about 100 members, as Mr. Cremer, the courteous steward, informs me, after pointing out the beauties of the club and its charming garden. The recreation room is a large, finely proportioned hall, with materials for all kinds of games, and chairs and tables for rest and recreation. The walls are embellished with handsome engravings and numerous signed portraits of the Royal family; all presents. Mr. Cremer points with justifiable pride to the cleanliness and good order of the crockery and all accessories. The club was opened by the Prince in 1884, and is

constantly visited by the Royal family and their friends. Among many well-known signatures in the visitors' book I note: Victoria R.I., April 25, 1889; Louise, April 25, 1889; Leopold of Belgium, April 10, 1887; Frederick C.P. of Denmark and Albert Edward, *P.*

"PRIDE OF FLEET" AND FOAL.

Edward and George; Victoria Emps. Dowr. Frederick of G. and Queen of Prussia, Jan. 14, 1889 (one of the most beautiful handwritings I have ever seen); Victoria Mary of Teck, Jan. 12, 1892; Maude of Wales, Jan. 12, 1892; and others too numerous to men-

tion. The Royal family seem usually to sign merely their Christian names on each visit. There is also a similar club with the same rules at Wolferton. Far and near all seem Royal Pets. Picture to yourself (and if you lived near Sandringham you might see the original picture whenever the Royal family is in residence) our gracious Princess, assisted by her daughters or her Royal husband, picking up the dusty little dots of children from the roads, placing them in her own carriage until it is completely packed, and then duly delivering each at its own home, so that they may say they



"URSA MINOR."

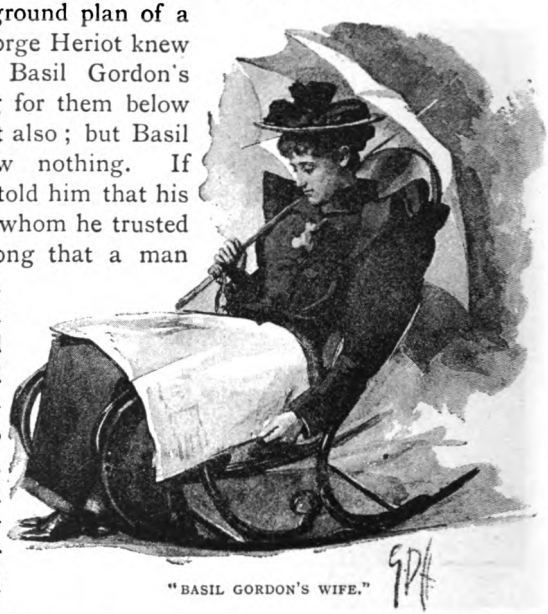
have enjoyed a ride with her that day. Consider, too, and this also is of everyday occurrence, our Prince going to the Workmen's Club and chatting as an ordinary private gentleman to the workmen on his estate; entering with a sympathetic interest into their troubles, and always ready with advice and assistance even to the lowliest. Can it be matter of wonder that when such things are done that the Royal family is almost worshipped on its estate? "Sir," says a tenant of thirty years' standing, "I have known that Royal lady leave a sick labourer's bedside at ten o'clock at night, go to her own home, take delicate things from her own dinner table, and bring them back *herself* to the sick man at nearly eleven o'clock at night." As he truly queries, "How many ladies would do as much for the poor?" All honour, health, and long and happy days to such true Royalty. L

The Fog on the Blumlis Alp.

By Francis Gribble.

Illustrations by Miss G. Demain Hammond.

THOUGH there was a tragedy to be played out presently up there beside the dazzling snowfields of the Blumlis Alp, both the players were unaware of it as yet, and only one of them knew that the ground plan of a tragedy was laid. George Heriot knew this, it is true, and Basil Gordon's wife, who was waiting for them below at Kandersteg, knew it also; but Basil Gordon himself knew nothing. If anyone had come and told him that his companion and friend whom he trusted had done him the wrong that a man must not pardon even if he will, he would probably have knocked him down first, and asked for an explanation afterwards. So no one did tell him, though many guessed the truth, and, it may be, he would never have discovered it, had not an accident revealed it to him, and a stray puff of wind among the mountains caught up the written proof of Ella Gordon's shame, and laid it fluttering at her husband's feet.



"BASIL GORDON'S WIFE."

The two men had come down together over the Dunden Pass that leads to Kandersteg from Lauterbrunnen. It is quite an easy pass; there are no snowfields to plough through, no yawning berg-schrunds to cross, no tangled ice-falls to thread, no narrow ledges of rock to creep along. The only difficulty consists in choosing, towards your journey's end, the one particular grass slope among many which does not lead over a thousand feet or so of precipice into the Oeschinen See. It is a pass, indeed, that you can make quite easily without a guide, provided that the

weather holds good, and you know the way. Otherwise, no doubt, there might be trouble. But George Heriot knew the way —there were few Alpine high-ways or bye-ways that he did not know by heart—and Basil Gordon trusted his knowledge, and agreed to make the journey with him.

They had crossed the pass itself, and were sitting down to rest on the ridge of the lateral moraine that towers above the Blumlis Alp glacier. The hour was growing late, and a white mist was blowing up towards them from the lower reaches of the valley; but, as they were tired, and as George Heriot claimed to be able to find the way down to the shores of the Oeschinen See blindfold, it did not frighten them into hurrying. And it was while they sat and rested there that the accident happened through which Basil Gordon learnt the truth.

The last of the cold meat, and Gruyère cheese, and Alpine honey was eaten, and the last bottle of white wine emptied, and they filled their pipes to smoke. While George Heriot was fumbling in his side-pocket for the matches he carried loose there, he accidentally pulled out a letter and dropped it on the ground. A gust of wind blew it over to the place where Basil Gordon sat. He reached out his arm and picked it up, to hand it back, and noticed that it was in his wife's handwriting.

There was nothing extraordinary in that. Gordon would almost certainly have returned it, without comment, never supposing it to be anything but an old invitation to lunch or dinner, or some equally innocent communication, written at his own desire. But the quick, peremptory tone in which the other exclaimed, "Gordon, give me that letter, please," impelled him, almost involuntarily, to throw a casual glance over it.

The few words that just caught his eye were sufficiently surprising to induce him to read further, more especially as his companion repeated his demand:

"Gordon, I asked you to give me back that letter."

"I have a right to read this letter, Heriot," he answered, "and I mean to do so."

Basil Gordon was a strong man, albeit an indifferent mountaineer, and if it came to a physical struggle for the possession of the document, there was not a question that he would get the best of it. George Heriot was conscious of this, so he made no resistance, but waited in terror for the inevitable thunderbolt to fall. Slowly, from the first line to the last, Basil Gordon read the letter through. Unless it were a forgery—and

for such a forgery no motive was imaginable—it left him absolutely no room for doubt. The truth—the hideous truth that he had never so much as guessed or dreamed of—stood out before him in all its ghastly nakedness. He felt like a man dazed, and pressed his hand against his forehead, doubting the evidence of his own senses. But, when he had read it through a second time, at last he realised the fearful discovery he had made. Then he tore it in two, and put the pieces in his pocket, and stood up in his wrath and faced the man who had betrayed him.

The fog that streamed up the valley was fast thickening around them. Already, though they were standing only some six or seven yards apart, they could barely distinguish each other's figures in the dimness.

Basil Gordon wasted neither breath nor time in reproaches or recriminations, but bluntly and passionately began—

"You scoundrel!"

The other stood dumb before him, and he continued—

"You scoundrel. If I treated you as you deserve, I would fling you down on to that glacier, and leave your bones to rot there till the Day of Judgment."

As he spoke, he advanced a step or two along the narrow ridge of the moraine, and the other retired an equal space before him. Thoroughly frightened as he was, he knew that that threat, at all events, could not be executed by the inferior cragsman.

"You won't do that, Gordon," he stammered out. "You have your remedy, but you won't do that."

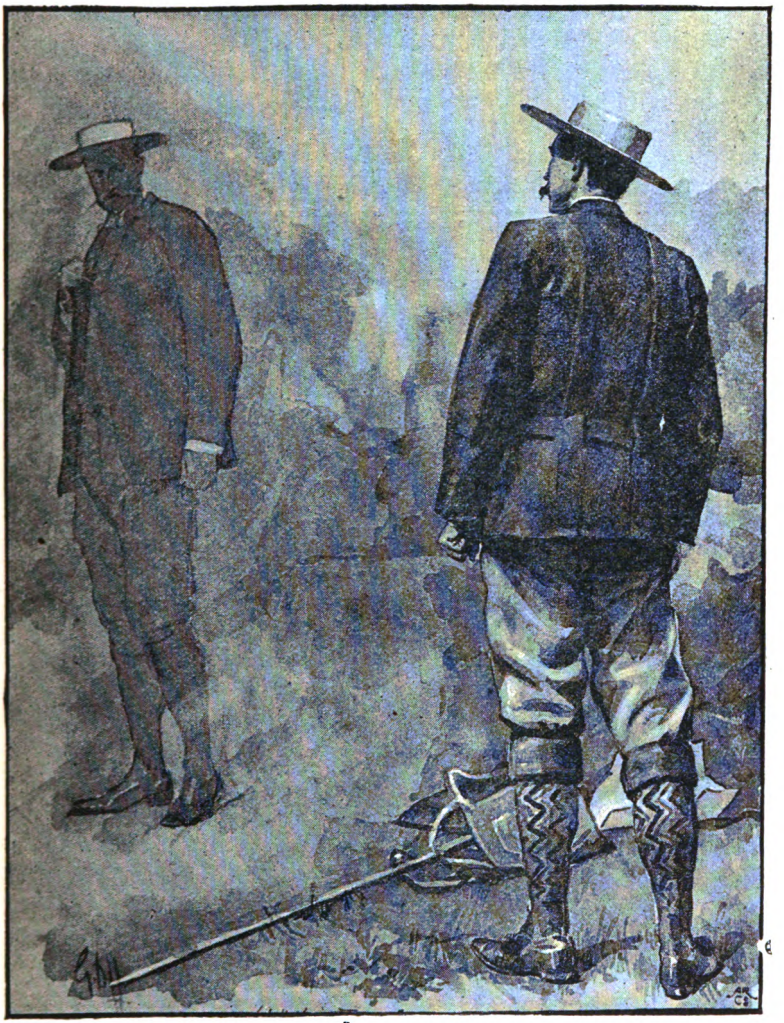
"Yes, by God!" Gordon answered, seeing the impossibility of this immediate vengeance, "I have my remedy, and I mean to take it. You're afraid of me now, you coward; but you'll be more scared still when you stand up to my pistol at fifteen paces. I may not be able to climb mountains, but I can shoot straight, Heriot. You know that I can shoot straight, don't you?"

"No," he added, as a further thought struck him, "you won't refuse to fight me. You won t dare. If you won't stand up to me like a man, I will shoot you like a dog, and risk the consequences."

He meant every word he said, and George Heriot knew it. He was a coward, and his cheeks were blanched, though Basil Gordon could not see it for the mist. Then his fears suggested an idea to him, and in the white darkness of that fog, he saw his one chance of ultimate deliverance from danger.

"You needn't be afraid," he said. "I will meet you and fight

you, when and where you like—always supposing that you get off this mountain alive. Under the circumstances you will hardly expect me to show you the way down. The track is a little awkward in the fog. I hope you'll find it."



"YOU SCOUNDREL!"

So speaking he turned away and disappeared into the mist For a few minutes his feet were heard plunging in the loose and treacherous shale, and then there was no sound save the noise of

the streams that ran out of the glacier, and bounded down over the rocks in cataracts.

Left to himself, Basil Gordon had but little notion of the proper route to take to get safely down to Kandersteg. By daylight he could have found the way easily enough with ordinary caution. But now the unnatural darkness of the fog was beginning to be complicated by the natural darkness of the night, and he could barely see his hand before his face.

Fortunately, he had taken a general survey of the track before the fog came on, and knew that he must first follow the line of the lateral moraine, and then ascend to the left, instead of taking what, in the dark, would have seemed the more obvious course of descending to the right. For the route to the right led only to the cliffs down which the glacier streams foam and tumble, but where no human foot can find a place to stand; while that to the left leads to the beginning of that intricate system of grass slopes which constitutes the one puzzle of the descent.

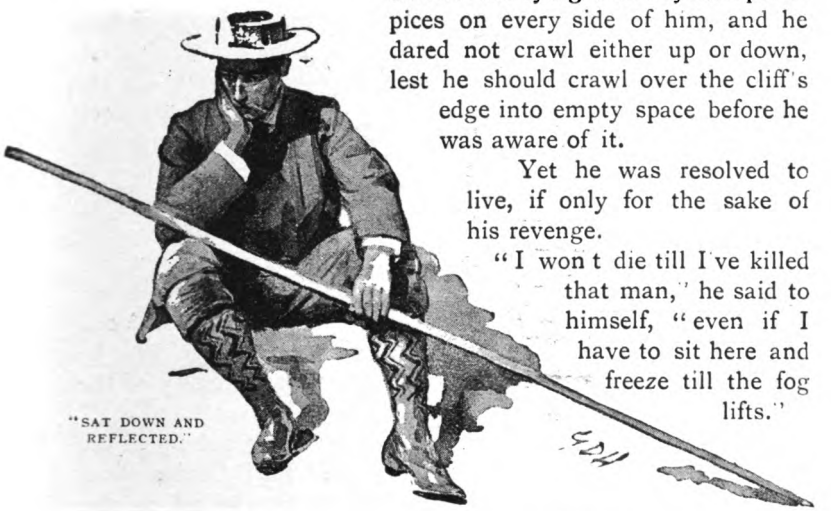
To get there it is necessary to cross all these little glacier cataracts aforesaid. By the help of his alpenstock a man can leap across them in places. To some of them, boulders, conveniently situated, serve as stepping stones; but as he could not see his way, Basil Gordon had to wade through them with imminent danger, where the stream ran strongly, of being washed off his feet.

It was an inexpressibly tedious process. At times he stumbled over stones he could not see, and bruised himself, and nearly sprained his ankle. At other times he sank nearly up to his knees in the damp shale, which seemed to threaten to absorb him like a quicksand. At last, however, he got finally clear of the moraine. The ground was harder, and the rocks were fewer; and he was able to clamber up the final ascent.

Considering his inexperience, it was almost a miracle that he had got so far in safety. However, he had only just reached the point at which the real difficulties begin. He now faintly perceived that he was in the midst of a series of low parallel grassy knolls, and that, in the hollows between the knolls, lay the beginnings of steep grass slopes, by one of which it was necessary for him to descend. There was nothing to guide him to the selection of the right one, so he sat down and reflected for a while. Then he started, experimentally and cautiously, down one of them, holding his alpenstock in readiness to arrest a fall.

Before he had gone many paces, the decline began to get ominously abrupt, and, just as the advisability of turning back

began to dawn on him, he felt his foot slipping. With all his might he ground his alpenstock into the soil beside him, and, dropping gently into a sitting posture, managed to prevent himself from falling farther. For five or ten minutes he sat there feeling the cold chill that runs through a man when he has suddenly saved himself from sudden peril. When he had recovered himself a little, and turned to think of climbing back again to the summit of the ridge, he found that he had wholly lost his bearings. His nerves were so shaken that it seemed to him that he was lying with abysmal precipices on every side of him, and he dared not crawl either up or down, lest he should crawl over the cliff's edge into empty space before he was aware of it.



"SAT DOWN AND REFLECTED."

Yet he was resolved to live, if only for the sake of his revenge.

"I won't die till I've killed that man," he said to himself, "even if I have to sit here and freeze till the fog lifts."

Then he made his preparations to spend the night upon the slope. He kicked little clefts in the turf in which to rest his heels, and pushed the iron-shod point of his alpenstock farther into the ground, and sat there, resting both his hands on it, that he might not slip. His feet were wet; the temperature was scarcely above freezing point, and falling fast; there was barely a tablespoon of brandy left in his flask, and he had nothing to eat except a single stick of chocolate. He ate it and sipped the cognac, and so temporarily stayed the faintness that was coming over him. Afterwards, he got out his pipe, and filled and lit it, and so waited for the dawn.

No one but those who have been benighted on the high Alps will fully realise the horrors of that dreadful bivouac. Only a man with a constitution of cast-iron could have lived through it. But Basil Gordon had a purpose to live for, and it supported him.

Towards the morning he even slept a little. The noise of a thunderstorm mingled with his dreams, and he fancied that he was chasing George Heriot through the mountains with his revolver. Then he awoke to find that the mist had scattered, and that the snowfields of the Doldenhorn and Weisse Frau were crimsoned by the newly-risen sun.

"At last," he said to himself. "Now I can go down to Kandersteg and shoot him."

"AT LAST, HE SAID."

After all, he found he was nowhere near a precipice, and now that he could see the way he was easily able to clamber up again to the place from which he had descended. Nor had he any difficulty in recovering the track. Some rough steps hewn in the rock indicated the beginning of it, and ordinary care enabled him to follow the remainder of the route. There were some *châlets* on the Oeschinen Alp, and a small boy from one of them indicated the little pathway that winds along the cliff high up above the Oeschinen See. Basil Gordon followed it without accident until he reached the little inn kept by the boatman at the further extremity of the lake.

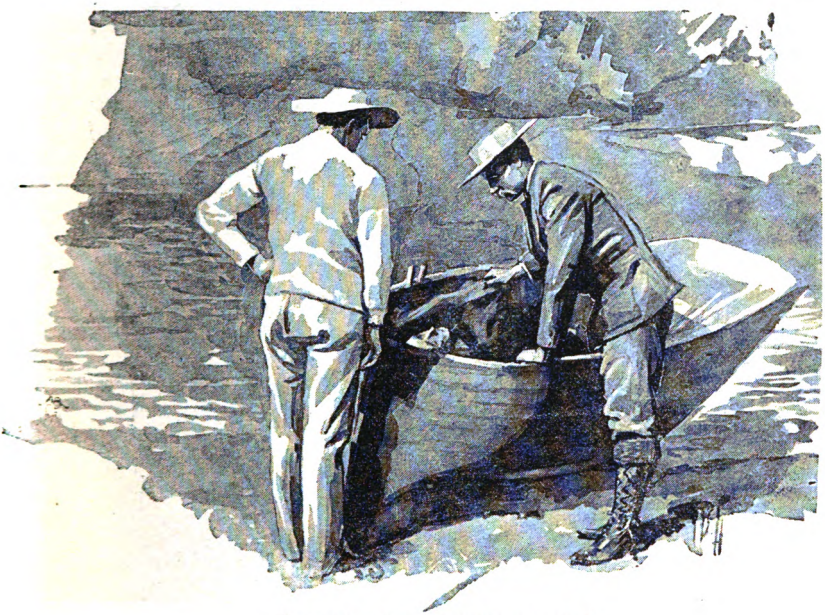
The boatman himself was out upon the lake ; but his wife brought Basil Gordon wine, bread and butter, and honey, and set on the kettle to boil to make tea for him. He ate and drank, and, though still stiff and miserable, felt revived.

After he had paid the bill, he strolled out on the beach. The boatman was rowing back to the shore, and, as Basil Gordon stepped down there, the keel was just grating on the pebbles.

In the bows of the boat lay a ghastly burden—the dead body of a man. The face was hidden by the boatman's coat; but Basil Gordon drew the covering off, and recognised the features of the man who had deserted him on the mountain, meaning that he should die there.

"I found the body there," the boatman said, pointing to a stretch of silver beach across the lake, three-quarters of a mile away.

Basil Gordon lifted the field-glass he carried, and swept the cliffs with it. What had happened was clear to him beyond doubt or question. In his confidence, George Heriot had lost the way without knowing he had lost it; he had started to descend the wrong grass slope, and, in doing so, had slipped and fallen. And, when once a man begins to slide down the steep grass slopes of the Oeschinen Alp, there is no further hope for him. Neither his alpenstock nor his prayers can stay him. There are no roots to cling to; no boulders for his feet to strike against; but he will



"GORDON DREW THE COVERING OFF."

slide on and on, faster and faster, until there is no more grass slope to slide on, but only empty space to fall through. The smiling bosom of the little Oeschinen See receives him, and the rest is silence.

"Take care of the body," Basil Gordon said. "I will see that someone is sent from Kandersteg to fetch it. There will be no difficulty about identification."

Then he turned and struggled down the short remainder of the path to the Hotel Victoria, pondering many things.

DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY.

My First Book.

"GRACE FORBEACH."

By David Christie Murray. Illustrations by Louis Gunnis.

I BEGAN it more years ago than I care to count, and, naturally enough, it took poetic form, if not poetic substance. In its original shape it was called "Marsh Hall,' and ran into four cantos. On the eve of my twenty-first birthday I sent the MS. to Messrs. Macmillan, who, very wisely, as I have since come to believe, counselled me not to publish it. I say this in all sincerity, though I remember some of the youthful bombast not altogether without affection. Here and there I can recall a passage which still seems respectable. I wrote reams of verse in those days, but when I came into the rough and tumble of journalistic life I was too occupied to court the Muses any longer, and found myself condemned to a life of prose. I was acting as special correspondent for the *Birmingham Morning News* in the year '73—I think it was '73, though it might have been a year later—and at that time Mr. Edmund Yates was lecturing in America, and a novel of his, the last he ever wrote, was running through our columns. Whether the genial "Atlas," who at that time had not taken the burden of *The World* upon his shoulders, found his associations too numerous and heavy, I can only guess, but he closed the story with an unexpected suddenness, and the editor, who had supposed himself to have a month or two in hand in which to make arrangements for his next serial, was confronted with the *finis* of Mr. Yates's work, and was compelled to start a new novel at a week's notice. In this extremity he turned to me. "I think, young 'un," he said, "that you ought to be able to write a novel." I shared his faith, and had, indeed, already begun a story which I had christened "Grace Forbeach." I handed him two chapters, which he read at once, and, in high feather, sent to the printer. It never bade fair to be a mighty work, but at least it fulfilled the meaning of the original edition of Pope's famous line, for it was certainly "all without a plan." I had appropriate scenery in my mind, no end of typical people to draw, and one or two moving actualities to work from. But I had forgotten the plot. To attempt a novel without a definite

scheme of some sort is very like trying to make a Christmas pudding without a cloth. Ruth Pinch was uncertain as to whether her first venture at a pudding might not turn out a soup. My novelistic effort, I am sorry to confess, had no cohesion in it. Its parts got loose in the cooking, and I have reason to think that most people who tried it found the dish repellent. The cashier assured me that I had sent down the circulation of the Saturday issue by sixteen thousand. I had excellent reasons for disbelieving this circumstantial statement in the fact that the

"I HANDED HIM TWO CHAPTERS.'

Saturday issue had never reached that number, but I have no doubt I did a deal of damage. There had been an idea in "Marsh Hall," and that, with interpolated ballads and poetic excursions and alarums of all sorts, I had found in it matter enough to fill out my four cantos. I set out with the intent to work that same idea through the pages of "Grace Forbeach," but it was too scanty for the uses of a three-volume novel, at least in the hands of a tyro. I know one or two accomplished gentlemen who could make it serve the purpose admirably, and, perhaps, I myself might do something with it at a pinch at this time of day. Anyhow, as it was, the cloth was too small to hold the pudding, and, in the process of cooking, I was driven to the most desperate expedients. To drop the simile and to come to the plain facts of

the case, I sent all my wicked and superfluous people into a coal-mine, and there put an end to them by an inrush of water. I forget what became of the hero, but I know that some of the most promising characters dropped out of that story, and were no more heard of. The sub-editor used occasionally, for my encouragement, to show me letters he received, denouncing the work, and asking wrathfully when it would end.

"SENT ALL MY PEOPLE INTO A COAL-MINE."

Whilst I am about "Grace Forbeach," it may be worth while to tell the story of the champion printer's error of my experience. I wrote at the close of the story:

"Are there no troubles now?" the lover asks.

"Not one, dear Frank. Not one."

And then, in brackets, thus [ ] I set the words:

[White line.]

This was a technical instruction to the printer, and meant that one line of space should be left clear. The genius who had the copy in hand put the lover's speech in type correctly, and then, setting it out as if it were a line of verse, he gave me—

"Not one, dear Frank, not one white line!"

It was a custom in the printing office to suspend a leather medal by a leather bootlace round the neck of the man who had achieved the prize *bêtise* of the year. It was somewhere about midsummer at this time, but it was instantly and unanimously resolved that nothing better than this would or could be done by anybody. The compositors performed what they called a "jerry"

in the blunderer's honour, and invested him, after an animated fight, with the medal.

"Grace Forbeach" has been dead and buried for very nearly a score of years. It never saw book form, and I was never anxious that it should do so, but as *it* had grown out of "Marsh Hall," so my first book grew out of it, and, oddly enough, not only my first, but my second and my third. "Joseph's Coat," which made my fortune, and gave me such literary standing as I have, was built on one episode of that abortive story, and "Val Strange" was constructed and written to lead up to the episode of the attempted suicide on Welbeck Head, which had formed the culminating point in the poem.

"INVESTED HIM, AFTER AN ANIMATED FIGHT, WITH THE MEDAL."

When I got to London I determined to try my hand anew, and, having learned by failure something more than success could ever have taught me, I built up my scheme before I started on my book. Having come to utter grief for want of a scheme to work on, I ran, in my eagerness to avoid that fault, into the opposite extreme, and built an ironbound plot, which afterwards cost me very many weeks of unnecessary and unvalued labour. I am quite sure that no reader of "A Life's Atonement" ever guessed that the author took one tithe, or even one twentieth part, of the trouble it actually cost to weave the two strands of its narrative together. I divided my story into thirty-six chapters. Twelve of these were autobiographical, in the sense that they were supposed to be written by the hero in person. The remaining twenty-four were historical, purporting to be written, that is, by an impersonal author. The autobiographical portions necessarily began in the childhood of the narrator, and between them and the "History" there was a considerable gulf of time. Little by little this gulf had to be bridged over until the action in both portions of the story became synchronous. I really do not suppose that the most pitiless critic ever felt it worth

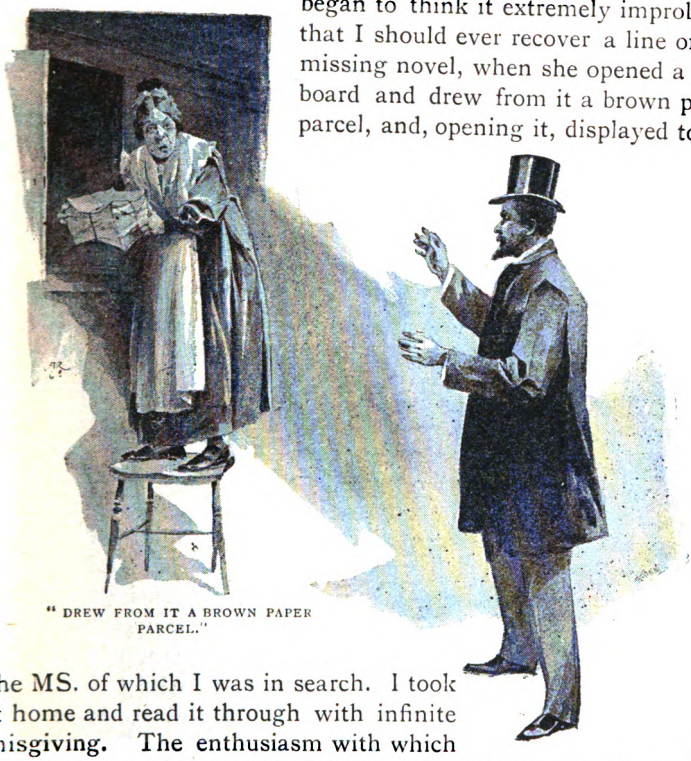
his while to question the accuracy of my dates, and I daresay that all the trouble I took was quite useless, but I fixed in my own mind the actual years over which the story extended, and spent scores of hours in the consultation of old almanacs. I have never verified the work since it was done, but I believe that in this one respect, at least, it is beyond cavil. The two central figures of the book were lifted straight from the story of "Marsh Hall," and "Grace Forbeach" gave her quota to the narrative.

I had completed the first volume when I received a commission to go out as special correspondent to the Russo-Turkish war. I left the MS. behind me, and for many months the scheme was banished from my mind. I went through those cities of the dead, Kesanlik, Calofar, Carleva and Sopot. I watched the long-drawn artillery duel at the Shipka Pass, made the dreary month-long march in the rainy season from Orkhanié to Plevna, with the army of reinforcement, under Chefket Pasha and Chakir Pasha, lived in the besieged town until Osman drove away all foreign visitors, and sent out his wounded to sow the whole melancholy road with corpses. I put up on the heights of Tashkesen, and saw the stubborn defence of Mehemet Ali, and there was pounced upon by the Turkish authorities for a too-faithful dealing with the story of the horrors of the war, and was deported to Constantinople. I had originally gone out for an American journal at the instance of a gentleman who exceeded his instructions in despatching me, and I was left high and dry in the Turkish capital without a penny and without a friend. But work of the kind I could do was wanted, and I was on the spot. I slid into an engagement with the *Scotsman*, and then into another with the *Times*.

"CONSULTING OLD ALMANACS"

The late Mr. Macdonald, who was killed by the Pigott forgeries, was then manager of the leading journal, and offered me fresh work. I waited for it, and a year of wild adventure in the face of war had given me such a taste for that sort of existence that I let "A Life's Atonement" slide, and had no thought of taking it up again. A misunderstanding with the *Times* authorities—happily cleared up years after—left me in the cold, and I was bound to do something for a living. The first volume of "A Life's Atonement" had been written in the interests of labour in the Gallery of the House of Commons, and such work as an active hack journalist can find among the magazines and the weekly society papers. I had been away a whole year, and everywhere my place was filled. It was obviously no use to a man in want of ready money to undertake the completion of a three-volume novel of which only one volume was written, and so I betook myself to the writing of short stories. The very first of these was blessed by a lucky accident. Mr. George Augustus Sala had begun to write for *The Gentleman's Magazine* a story called, if I remember rightly, "Dr. Cupid." Sala was suddenly summoned by the proprietors of the *Daily Telegraph* to undertake one of his innumerable journeys, and the copy of the second instalment of his story reached the editor too late for publication. Just when the publishers of the *Gentleman's* were at a loss for suitable copy, my MS. of "An Old Meerschaum" reached them, and, to my delighted surprise, I received proofs almost by return of post. The story appeared, with an illustration by Arthur Hopkins, and, about a week later, there came to me, through Messrs. Chatto and Windus, a letter from Robert Chambers: "Sir,—I have read, with unusual pleasure and interest, in this month's *Gentleman's Magazine* a story from your pen entitled 'An Old Meerschaum.' If you have a novel on hand, or in preparation, I should be glad to see it. In the meantime, a short story, not much longer than 'An Old Meerschaum,' would be gladly considered by—Yours very truly, ROBERT CHAMBERS. P.S.—We publish no authors' names, but we pay handsomely." This letter brought back to mind at once the neglected "Life's Atonement," but I was uncertain as to the whereabouts of the MS. I searched everywhere amongst my own belongings in vain, but it suddenly occurred to me that I had left it in charge of a passing acquaintance of mine, who had taken up the unexpired lease of my chambers in Gray's Inn at the time of my departure to the seat of war. I jumped into a cab, and drove off in search of

my property. The shabby old laundress who had made my bed and served my breakfast was pottering about the rooms. She remembered me perfectly well, of course, but could not remember that I had left anything behind me when I went away. I talked of manuscript, and she recalled doubtfully a quantity of waste paper, of the final destination of which she knew nothing. I began to think it extremely improbable that I should ever recover a line of the missing novel, when she opened a cupboard and drew from it a brown paper parcel, and, opening it, displayed to me



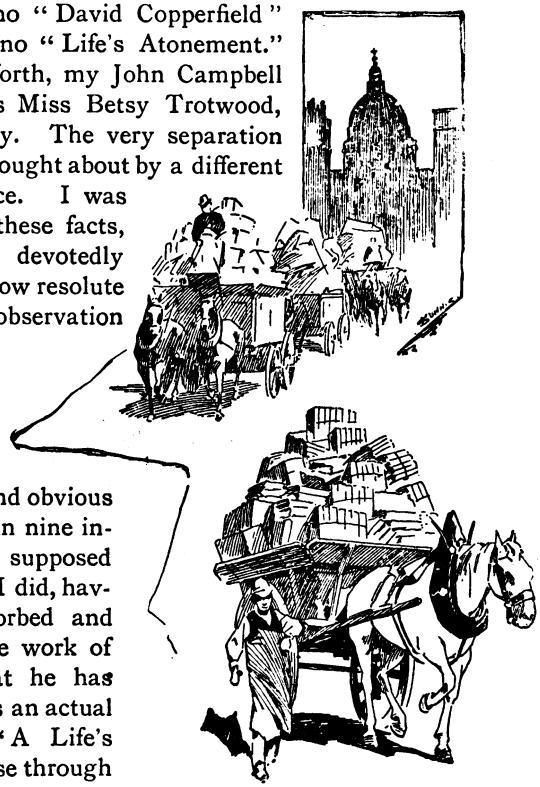
"DREW FROM IT A BROWN PAPER PARCEL."

the MS. of which I was in search. I took it home and read it through with infinite misgiving. The enthusiasm with which I had begun the work had long since had time to pall, and the whole thing looked weary, flat, stale, and unprofitable. For one thing, I had adopted the admirable expedient of writing in the present tense so far as the autobiographical portion of the work was concerned, and, in the interval which had gone by, my taste had, I suppose, undergone an unconscious correction. It was a dull business, but, despondent as I was, I found the heart to rewrite those chapters. Charles Reade describes the task of writing out one's work a second time as "nauseous," and I confess that I am with him with all my heart. It is a misery which I have never since, in all my work, imposed upon myself.

At that time I counted amongst my friends an eminent novelist, on whose critical faculty and honesty I knew I could place the most absolute reliance. I submitted my revised first volume to his judgment, and was surprised to learn that he thought highly of it. His judgment gave me new courage, and I sent the copy in to Chambers. After a delay of a week or two, I received a letter which gave me, I think, a keener delight than has ever touched me at the receipt of any other communication. "If," wrote Robert Chambers, "the rest is as good as the first volume, I shall accept the book with pleasure. Our price for the serial use will be £250, of which we will pay £100 on receipt of completed MS.; the remaining £150 will be paid on the publication of the first monthly number." I had been out of harness for so long a time, and had been, by desultory work, able to earn so little, that this letter seemed to open a sort of Eldorado to my gaze. It was not that alone which made it so agreeable to receive. It opened the way to an honourable ambition which I had long nourished, and I slaved away at the remaining two volumes with an enthusiasm which I have never been able to revive. There are two or three people still extant who know in part the privations I endured whilst the book was being finished. I set everything else on one side for it, incautiously enough, and for two months I did not earn a penny by other means. The most trying accident of all the time was the tobacco famine which set in towards the close of the third volume, but, in spite of all obstacles, the book was finished. I worked all night at the final chapter, and wrote "Finis" somewhere about five o'clock on a summer morning. I shall never forget the solemn exultation with which I laid down my pen and looked from the window of the little room in which I had been working over the golden splendour of the gorse-covered common of Ditton Marsh. All my original enthusiasm had

"IF THERE HAD BEEN NO DAVID COPPERFIELD."

revived, and in the course of my lonely labours had grown to a white heat. I solemnly believed at that moment that I had written a great book. I suppose I may make that confession now without proclaiming myself a fool. I really and seriously believed that the work I had just finished was original in conception, style, and character. No reviewer ever taunted me with the fact, but the truth is that "A Life's Atonement" is a very curious instance of unconscious plagiarism. It is quite evident to my mind now that if there had been no "David Copperfield" there would have been no "Life's Atonement." My Gascoigne is Steerforth, my John Campbell is David, John's aunt is Miss Betsy Trotwood, Sally Troman is Peggotty. The very separation of the friends, though brought about by a different cause, is a reminiscence. I was utterly unconscious of these facts, and, remembering how devotedly and honestly I worked, how resolute I was to put my best of observation and invention into the story, I have ever since felt chary of entertaining a charge of plagiarism against anybody. There are, of course, flagrant and obvious cases, but I believe that in nine instances out of ten the supposed criminal has worked as I did, having so completely absorbed and digested in childhood the work of an admired master that he has come to feel that work as an actual portion of himself. "A Life's Atonement" ran its course through *Chambers's Journal* in due time, and was received with favour. Messrs. Griffith and Farren undertook its publication in book form, but one or two accidental circumstances forbade it to prosper in their hands. To begin with, the firm at that time had only newly decided on publishing novels at all, and a work under such a title, and issued by such a house, was naturally supposed to have a theological tendency. Then again, in the very week in



"THE STOCK WAS TRANSFERRED."

which my book saw the light, "Lothair" appeared, and for the time being swamped everything. All the world read "Lothair," all the world talked about it, and all the newspapers and reviews dealt with it, to the exclusion of the products of the smaller fry. Later on, "A Life's Atonement" was handsomely reviewed, and was indeed, as I am disposed to think, praised a good deal beyond its merits. But it lay a dead weight on the hands of its original publishers, until Messrs. Chatto and Windus expressed a wish to incorporate it in their Piccadilly Series. The negotiations between the two houses were easily completed, the stock was transferred from one establishment to the other, the volumes were stripped of their old binding and dressed anew, and with this novel impetus the story reached a second edition in three-volume form. It brought me almost immediately two commissions, and by the time that they were completed I had grown into a professional novel writer.

A Dream in the Night.

By Coulson Kernahan.

Illustrations by Miss C. M. D. Hammond.

A MAN lay on his bed at midnight, and dreamt that he stood alone by the sea, and that his hour of death was nigh. He looked out upon the black and interminable waste of waters, and up to the pitiless stars in the scowling sky, as the mariner gazes upon a new and unknown land which he is approaching, and he told himself that soon he should know the secrets of sea and sky. And as he stood, there blew from the gates of night and across the sea, a wind that made him shiver less with physical cold than with a sense of soul desolation and loneliness; a wind that chilled the heart of him even more than the body. And as he looked again upon the windy and cloudswept sky, and to the cold and steely glitter of the silent stars, his lonely spirit, losing itself in the infinite abyss, turned sick and giddy at the thought of dying, and reeled shuddering to earth again.

And the man thought of the woman he loved, the wife of his heart and mother of his children, and that if he and she might but die together—if he might but set out with her hand in his, he should no longer fear to make death's journey; and, even as he so thought, he awoke with pounding heart and panting breath; awoke to shudder at the darkness and the loneliness, and with a nameless fear lying at the centre of life, like the lurking shadow of an unknown, unseen foe. And as he lay he heard the low breathing of his sleeping wife, and with a sigh of glad relief, and all sense of lonesomeness and darkness gone, the man closed his eyes and fell asleep.

And again he dreamed a dream in which he thought that he stood in the presence of God. Whether he had been borne to the infinite regions which stretch on and away, and yet away, and yet again away, beyond the limits of our universe; or whether he were still on the earth; or had soared to a distant star, or to the vast and void sky-spaces that lie between the worlds; or had crept into the narrow chamber of the human soul—the man knew not, but he was aware in some wonderful way of all that was taking place on all God's myriad and marvellous worlds.

"HE STOOD ALONE BY THE SEA."

He saw circling planets sweep faster and faster on their ever-narrowing orbit, until at last they fell and flew, like moths to a candle, to feed the flaming furnace of the sun; and he looked upon his own home, and saw the billowy rise and fall of his sleeping wife's bosom, and heard the cry of the child that lay in a cot by her side. He gazed upon burnt-out worlds, moons that had once been astir with life, and heard the cooling and cinderous surface crack into chasm and cave; and he looked into the bowels of the earth, and saw strange creatures breeding and sporting amid the central fires. He watched comets, those vagabonds of the heavens, wandering gipsy-like between the worlds, or weaving outlying system to outlying system, like nebulous shuttlecocks of the skies, and he saw into the secret workings of human souls. He looked upon the planet Jupiter, the laboratory of God, and beheld moving athwart the thin atmosphere, strange shapes, uncanny as a half-formed, prematurely-born babe, that seemed neither spirit nor flesh, but

which he knew were the soul-embryos of creatures which, developing by progressive stages and from age to age, should, in the æons to be, become beings infinitely greater than man, and scarcely less glorious than God; and he looked beneath the earth's surface, and watched the anxious running to and fro of innumerable ants.

Then raising his head the man looked into the eyes of God, and saw eternity lying therein. And at that sight the man fell back with a cry like that of one smitten by the lightning, and with the very soul of him sick and swooning with fear.

But in a voice of infinite tenderness, God spake to the man, bidding him be of good cheer. And God said: "Art thou he who feared death because of its loneliness?"

And the man said: "I am he."

And to him the Almighty spake again: "Thou *diest* alone, but I *live* alone; and as is the sound which thou hearest in the hollow convolutions of a shell to the roar of the central sea, so is thy loneliness to Mine. When God throws His arms around a soul and draws that soul away from its companions, and to Himself, then is that soul very lonely, but the loneliness is but the being gathered to the heart of God."

Then said the man: "By Thee all that is in heaven above or in the earth beneath was created. Thou hast but to speak the word, and lo! a legion of angels are at Thy side, waiting and willing to do Thy bidding, and to bear Thee company by night or by day."

But God made answer: "That which I create, be it angel or archangel, is but My creature, and can never be My companion."

And again the man: "Thou art God the Eternal One, Ruler of Earth and Sea. Is it nothing to Thee that all men worship Thee and hold Thee in reverence?"

And to him the Almighty made answer: "The thought of God is, to most men, but a plank to which they hope to cling when the waters of death are closing over their heads. How many are there, thinkest thou, who love the God they have never seen as thou lovest thy wife and child?"

And the man said: "Thou hast but to say the word, and behold all men *must* love Thee."

But God answered him: "The love which I compel I care not for."

Then said the man: "Thou art God, the Omnipotent One. Sun, moon, and stars sprang into being at Thy bidding. Thou hadst but to say, "Let there be light," and there was light; and

"HE HAD DREAMED A DREAM."

Thou didst but breathe upon unclean and inanimate clay, and lo! it became an immortal soul, clothed in a form divinely fair, and fashioned in Thine own likeness; and man, the heir of eternity and image of God, came into being. To Thee all things are possible; and Thou hast but to say 'Let be!' to set at Thy side another God, like even unto Thyself, that so Thou mayst be alone no longer."

And yet again God said: "That which I create is but My creature, and can never be My companion, and, from My loneliness, even Mine own omnipotence is powerless to deliver me. Rememberest thou not of Him who was slain on Calvary, that men taunted Him, saying truly that 'He saved others: Himself He cannot save'? Even so from the loneliness wherefrom God saveth others, Himself God cannot save. The cry in loneliness that rang from Calvary's Cross rings throughout creation still. Nature is lonely because of My loneliness. Thou lookest out into the night, and thou shudderest, not because of the blackness

that broods between earth and sky, but because thou hast looked as into an abyss into the lonely soul of God. On every breeze is borne—were the ear of man attuned to hear it—the sound of innumerable lamentations, which is Nature's echo of God's lonely cry. God shudders—and, over the shining surface of the sea, a sudden tremor flits; God hides His countenance—and the sunshine fades from meadow and field, and darkness covers the face of the sky. But on the shadowless, shining peaks of Eternity, God sits lonely for ever; and into His loneliness neither man nor Nature can enter. Nay, of such loneliness as God's, the soul of man cannot even conceive, for man's death is not more lonely than God's life.

"*I am THE Loneliness: God is Loneliness, and Loneliness God.*"

The voice ceased, and the man awoke, and knew that he had been dreaming. Outside the wind made moan continually, and from the tossing tree tops there came a sound like the ceaseless sighing of the sea. And, for a moment, the man gazed into the black and brooding night, whence it seemed to him that eyes of infinite sadness looked out of the darkness into his own. In the next, he had drawn the curtain and turned from the window, that in the warmth and light of the room and the caresses of his waiting wife, he might cease even to remember that he had dreamed a dream.

Yet sometimes, as he stands and listens to the sea at midnight, there seems borne to him on every breeze a sound like that of innumerable lamentations, and then the man thinks again of his dream, and fancies that, in sobbing surge and wailing wind, he hears the cry of the lonely God.

MR. W. S. PENLEY.

Lions in their Dens.

W. S. PENLEY AT ST. JOHN'S, WOKING.

By G. B. Burgin.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.

(Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle and Young.)

ALL the world has been laughing for more than a year past at the eccentricities and mirth-provoking antics of that brilliant creation of Mr. Penley's genius, who so naïvely introduces herself to the British public as "Charley's Aunt from Brazil, where the nuts come from." No less amusing than this historical personage is Mr. Penley's Lord Fancourt Babberley, when, during the earlier part of the play, he announces his desire to be worthy of a long line of distinguished ancestors. "We have an uncle in our family who lost an ironclad," he says proudly, and a little later explains that he must be in love, for "I'm always wanting to be alone and hear the birds sing." "How the dickens am I to remember I'm a real old lady, with my trousers on?" he asks, when forced into feminine attire. But perhaps his quaintest rejoinder is to Colonel Chesney. "Do you know what a man most longs for when he is lonely and dull and wretched?" "Yes," replies "Charley's Aunt" with prompt decision, "A drink."

"DO YOU KNOW?"

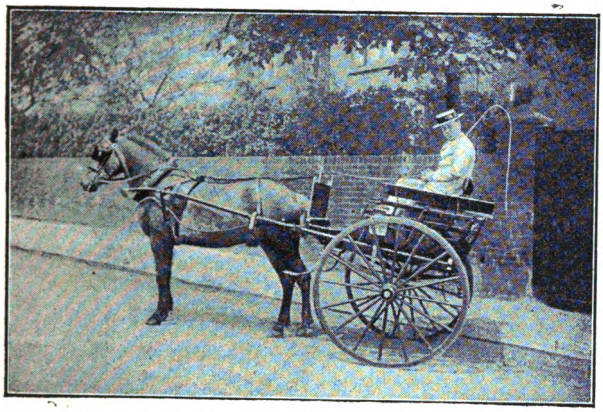
The average playgoer has become so accustomed for years past to see Mr. Penley kicked and cuffed about from pillar to post that the glimpse about to be disclosed of that gentleman's private life may disappoint him, in that it will reveal Mr. Penley in the light of a staid citizen, who has a solemn sense of his duties as a British taxpayer, and the father of a family of five, rather

than as an individual who is continually being "put upon." Indeed, Mr. Penley's eldest boy, on being taken to a performance of *The Private Secretary* some years ago, wept bitterly to see his parent maltreated, and refused to sit out the play. He is wiser now, and his tears are caused by laughter.

"The best way to get to Woking is to run down from Waterloo," suggests Mr. Dana, Mr. Penley's acting manager. "Mr. Penley will meet you at the station in his cart and tool you back to St. John's. It's only about a mile and a half." But when I reach Woking, Mr. Penley is not there; the only cart outside the station is filled with coals, and an insidious flyman beguiles me into his ramshackle vehicle. After a painfully slow preliminary putting away of nosebags, the resentful "fly" horse reluctantly consents to start, and we wander slowly adown the road in the direction of St. John's, only to find a cart shortly after coming smartly towards us drawn by a neat little grey cob. Mr. Penley, who drives, is clad in tennis trousers and red-ribboned straw hat, with the regulation brown leather boots and a light jacket. The flyman is left lamenting, Mr. Penley turns the cob homeward, and we speed past the hedges gay with blossoming wild rose and opening honeysuckle, the song of lark and thrush filling the air with melody. Every rustic louts low as we pass, and one or two of the residents turn to companions, their lips moving almost audibly, "That's Charley's Aunt, you know." But Mr. Penley, absorbed in the management of the cob, is not disconcerted by these evidences of local popularity. "Come in and have a sandwich," he says, as we pull up at the stables. "Then, if you like, we'll go over to Waterer's and see the rhododendrons. The best of them are over, but even now they're worth coming down here to look at. We can talk as we go along." "Can't I come too, and

LORD FANCOURT BABBERLEY.

bring Bob?" asks an active boy of about fourteen, in whom there is not the slightest resemblance to Mr. Penley. "My friend Garden," says Mr. Penley, and "my friend Garden" renews his petition. Bob (a fox-terrier, with the solemn-looking head of a hound) frisks anxiously round until he is included in the party. The Retainer of the house of Penley comes to the cob's head, and we pass through an oak door leading into the garden of St. John's.

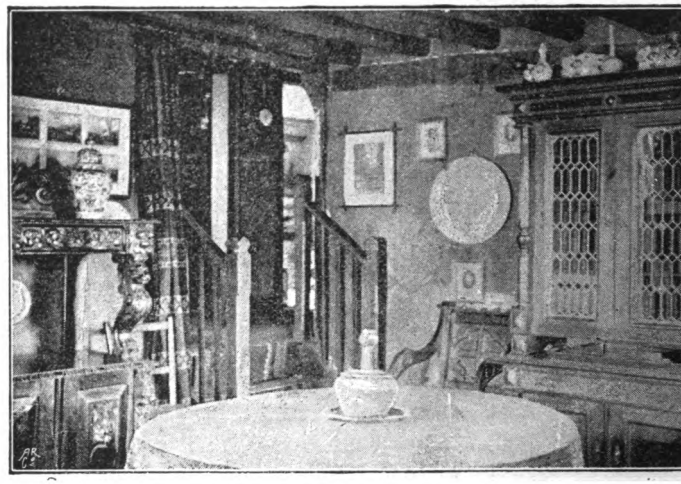


MR PENLEY'S CART

A winding gravel path leads up to the portico of the quaint, two-storied, old red-brick cottage which Mr. Penley and the Retainer between them have transformed into one of the cosiest and most picturesque residences near London. It is cross-beamed, has a red-tiled roof, and is girt about with clustering ivy and creepers of various kinds. The old kitchen has been transformed into a large entrance hall, and a new one built out from it. The original oak beams are still retained across the ceiling. Quaint old oak settles and curiously-shaped chairs harmonise with the time-worn ceiling. To the left of the hall is the

"IT'S 'THE GUTTA PERCHA GIRL!'"

dining-room, a spacious apartment with a veritable ingle nook. To get into the ingle nook, one has to dodge under the mantelpiece,



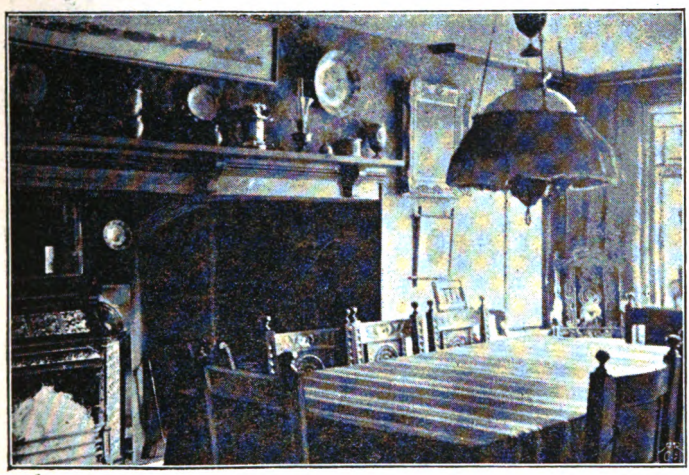
THE HALL.

but once within there is ample space for a person on each side to sit,

MR. W. S. PENLEY.

where, in former days, "the rude forefathers of the hamlet" of Woking doubtless snored the hours away. Mr. Penley's writing-desk stands in the bow window, which looks upon pleasant beds of flowers, and is completely shut out from the road. Originally, the front garden shelved down to the road, but Mr. Penley, who has an innate distaste for publicity, set The Retainer to work to raise the level, and after months of assiduous toil this was accomplished, a thick belt of shrubs still further concealing the whereabouts of the sensitive comedian. To the left of the

house is a long lawn capable of accommodating two sets of tennis players at once. This lawn has recently been converted from the old kitchen garden. The extreme drought, unfortunately, has acted with fatal effect upon it, and great bare patches of dead turf show how oft the best laid schemes of men go wrong. To the left of the house, Mr. Penley has added a huge kitchen garden, and beyond that a flourishing orchard. That good all-round man, "The Retainer," has built here a large greenhouse, in which the succulent cucumber and rosily blushing tomato seem equally at home, whilst underneath the benches Mr. Penley has hit upon the device of growing lettuces. He explains that the heat prevents their



THE DINING ROOM.

having any hearts, but the fresh young green leaves make very good salad notwithstanding. Mr. Penley, being in his way as ingenious as The Retainer, has invented an efficient system for utilising the sewage from the house in the vegetable garden by means of a force pump and an elaborate series of pipes laid at intervals down the walks so as to cover the whole area. At the bottom of the garden are more buildings containing fowls, the children's white rabbits, and some handsome pigeons whose ultimate destination is pie.

The cob once more comes round to the door, and we set out for Waterer's, reluctantly disregarding the plea of one little toddling girl to be allowed to accompany us. "I suppose I'd better begin,"

says Mr. Penley with a sigh, as if he would much rather be attending to what is going on around him. He casts an envious glance at a Crematorium which we happen to be passing, and then heroically turns away as if not wishing me to draw an inference which might be uncomfortable. "It s much nicer than the ordinary method of burial," he says, "and we shall all come to it in time. The service is the same; I don't know that it's any more horrible than mouldering to decay in a coffin. You know, I didn't begin life on the stage. When quite a little fellow I used to be in the choir at St. John's the Evangelist, and had an idea that some day I should sing. I used often to miss my tea rather than be late for rehearsal—I mean practice—on Friday evenings. I was born at Margate in '52, and my father—he was a schoolmaster—afterwards removed to Charles Street, Westminster, where the recruiting sergeants used to be, don't you know. That's a poultry farm over there, with that fool of a hen trying to get the ducklings out of the water, Oh, then I started as a singer—used to be principal bass with Bellew at Bedford Chapel, Bloomsbury. I fancy Stopford Brooke's there now. Then I went to the Russian Embassy Chapel, where Count Schouvaloff taught me the Greek service. After that, I tried City life with Copestakes, of Bow Churchyard. One day I met a chorister friend of mine who said, 'Look here, old fellow, I can get you a berth as chorister with Emily Sheridan in *Ixion Rewheeled* at the Opera Comique, if you care about it.' I thought I'd like to try, and afterwards went to the Royalty as the Foreman in *Trial by Jury*, under the management of Selina Dolaro."

A FAMILY GROUP

"Weren't you in *Princess Toto* in '76—Zapeter, I think your part was called? There was a very funny parody of 'Hiawatha' in it."

"That's strange. I don't suppose I've ever thought of it since, and yet I believe I could repeat every word. I never forget a part. Oh, yes. Here it is. It must be spoken as quickly as possible. Listen:

"Oh, thou proud and mighty monarch,
Monarch of a loyal country,
Monarch of a spacious city
Dotted with unnumbered villas,
Villas standing in a garden,
Villas with commodious stabling,
Stabling for a pair of horses,
Stabling with a man's room over—
If you ask me if I'm equal
To sustain the part of red man
So as to defy detection,
If the being quite familiar
With the metre and construction
Of the poem Hiawatha
Is enough to qualify me,
Apprehend no kind of danger.
I can give to Pau Puk Keewis,
Pau Puk Keewis the great boaster,
And the lovely Minnehaha
Sixty four, and beat 'em easy."

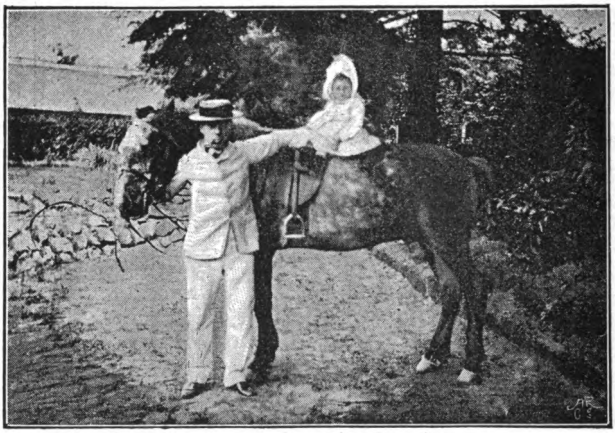
MR. PENLEY IN "ÆSOP'S FABLES."

"After that, I played lots of parts, until one day Hawtrey came to me and asked if I would play Tree's part in *The Private Secretary*—the Rev. Robert Spalding. Ultimately, I agreed to do this, and made a big success, by playing the part as seriously as possible. I only had two rehearsals, but it went swimmingly from the first. I used to get letters from clergymen saying it was an excellent performance, and what a lesson it was. They told me I didn't abuse the cloth, but was always a gentleman, and gave a very good lesson to some of their curates. One man wrote me he would certainly send his curate to see it, and very likely it would do him good if anything could. Then everybody wrote parts on the same lines, and submitted plays to me as if I played nothing but curates. I've a style of my own, and don't play curates in everything I do. After running for two years, *The Private Secretary* began to be a little monotonous, although I got ten pounds a week for playing in it.

"That place up there's the prison where Mrs. Maybrick is confined. Lovely spot, isn't it? There are all sorts of rumours

current about the unhappy woman and her despair. Now, we'll drive through Waterer's, and out at the other gate."

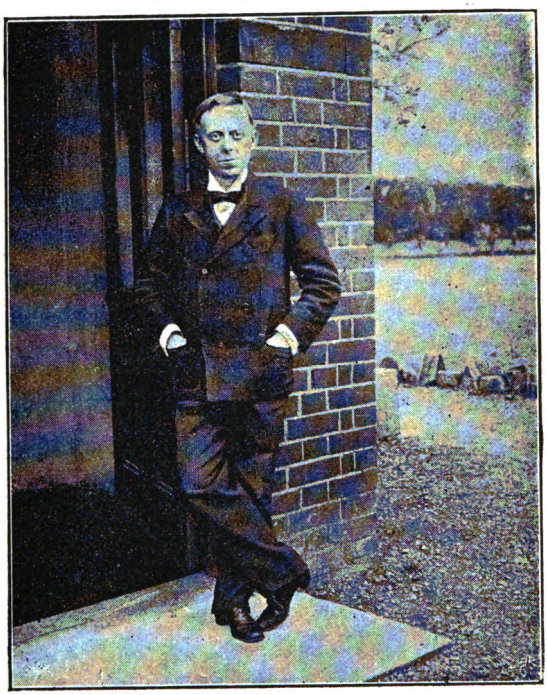
The grey cob trots swiftly along a wide, straight avenue, bordered on either side with the most exquisite masses of rhododendrons, graduating from tall trees in the background to shrubs no higher than a gooseberry bush in the front. They are of every colour, from the deepest purple to pure white. Innumerable bees drone deep down the trusses of bloom; others, intoxicated with too much sweetness, lie helpless upon the gravel-drive as if, in manufacturing the poisonous honey described by Xenophon, they had lost their senses, and were drugged. Mr. Penley dexterously refrains from crushing as many as possible, and we fetch a compass back to St. John's just in time for lunch. Mr. Penley will not hear of any more interviewing until after that is despatched. "My friend Garden" introduces me to his sisters, two pretty girls of about thirteen and fourteen respectively, who are very enthusiastic about everything pertaining to the stage. Mrs. Penley is kept busily engaged in supplying the wants of the three small Penleys who are under the parental roof. The two boys are at school, but were recently granted a holiday in order to witness a *matinée* performance of *Charley's Aunt*. On their way up to town an old lady mournfully asked them if they were going to see *Charley's Aunt*. "I've been trying to see it for a long time," she said, "but they tell me I must wait until November before I can get a seat."



LITTLE MISS PENLEY

Mr. Penley always dines in the middle of the day. Unfortunately, he is extremely dyspeptic, and is obliged to limit himself to a very strict diet. Perhaps his method of life has something to do with this, inasmuch as he returns from London to Woking by

the last train every night, and seldom gets to bed until one or half-past. He finds that in order to endure the strain upon him of so many performances (eight) a week, he has to husband his resources, and shun like poison the champagne-and-oyster suppers of too fervent admirers. He declares it would be utterly impossible for him to go into society and get through his work satisfactorily at the same time, and so, like a wise man, hurries back from the theatre directly the performance is over.



MR W S PENLEY.

But all this time *Charley's Aunt* has been in abeyance. "It isn't wise to work directly after lunch," Mr. Penley declares with an air of such supreme confidence in his assertion that there is nothing to do but acquiesce. "Can you manage to work in the dingey? If so, get your hat, and I'll take you down the Basingstoke Canal and drop you on your way to the station."

Once more we traverse the garden until we reach a gate at the bottom, and work our way, by a circuitous route beneath over-arching roses and honeysuckle, to the canal shore. Fastened to the bank, with the ivy-covered bridge forming a picturesque background to it, is a small, stout boat, nearly as broad as it is long. In the middle of this boat is something which looks like a barrel upside down. On closer inspection, however, it proves to be a boiler, which the indefatigable Retainer, under Mr. Penley's watchful eye, has fastened to the bottom of the boat. This boiler is the one corroding grief of The Retainer's life. He labours under the impression that it is

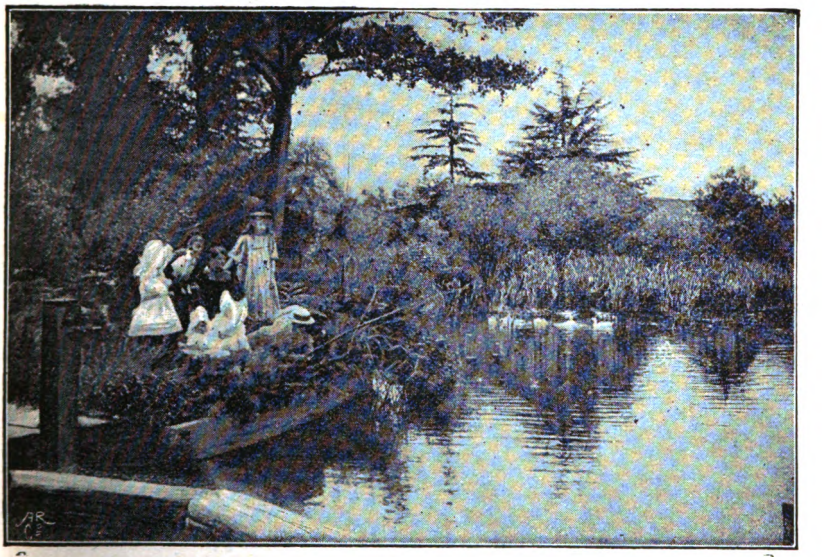
as desperately wicked and deceitful as the heart of man, and always yearning to blow some one up. Acting on this belief, he cannot be induced to get up the proper amount of steam. When an eighty pounds pressure is required to obtain any way on the boat, he so manipulates the boiler that only forty is obtainable. Mr. Penley, therefore, has never been able to realise what latent swiftness may be lurking in this rotund greyhound of the Basingstoke Canal. "You sit there," he says, as the boiler emits a suppressed snort, and the little vessel slowly edges out into mid-canal. "We shall pick up directly and put the pace on. You don't mind blacks on your nose, do you?"

MR. AND MRS PENLEY.

I do mind blacks on my nose, but they fall as thick and

THE DINGY.

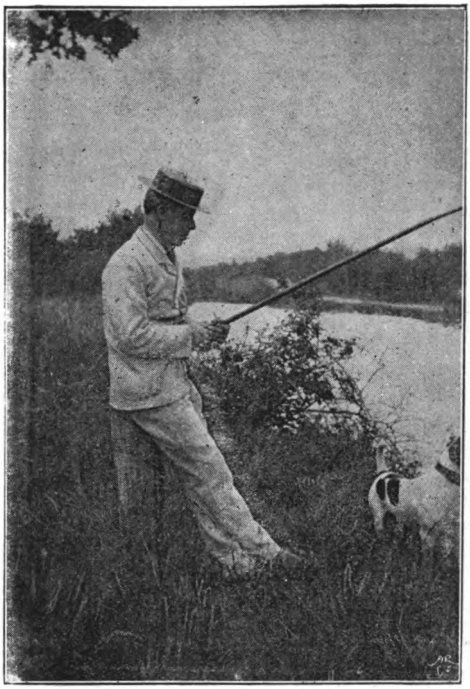
fast as leaves in Vallombrosa. When the boiler is not emitting blacks, it spits. Consequently, the blacks begin to liquefy in sable streams, which trickle down in all directions. The boiler keeps up such a continuous conversation, so splutters and mutters, that we ought to be doing ten knots an hour; "instead of which," any camel could give us a quarter of a mile in a mile race, and romp in an easy winner. The children lounge lazily along the banks, read books or pick bulrushes, and crawl on after us when we get a few yards ahead. Mr. Penley, undismayed by this apparent lack of progression, industriously thrusts very small lumps of coal into the boiler's insatiate maw, and the boiler as regularly vomits



THE FAMILY DETERMINE TO HELP MR. PENLEY FISH.

them forth again in the shape of blacks. The blue heaven above us is seen through an inky haze. "She'll soon be all right," says Mr. Penley, stoking away with unabated cheerfulness. "If not, we'll go back, and I'll drive you down. Where were we? Oh, *Charley's Aunt* (I am afraid you're getting very black). The play was my idea, and Brandon Thomas wrote it. Later on, we went down into the country and worked at it. Then we worked it out on the stage. I believe if you want to do a thing to please the London public you have to get behind the scenes, *i.e.*, without rehearsing you can't judge much about it. A man must have time to do a thing. You can't legitimately ask him to be

funny on the first night: he is too anxious. If, however, you get him to work at it for three or four months, he has a much better chance of success. *Charley's Aunt* was made in that way. The great thing about the play is that it is simply pure and wholesome. It doesn't profess to teach people. My own opinion is that people who come to see a play don't want to be taught. It is all very well to teach people and lecture them in theory, but it does not do on the stage. We give them a play with plenty of action, and the action transpires so quickly that we don't allow them time to think. We want to amuse people, to get along with the play, and not give them time to think about the moral lesson it is supposed to be conveying. This, I think, is one of the secrets of success. But especially in farcical comedy you should avoid making people think: you want them to laugh. There are a few people who come to the theatre and consider it sinful to laugh. They complain they can't hear everything, but when we are sometimes supposed to be talking we are in reality continuing the action of the piece, and the dialogue which is missed is not meant to be heard.



THEY GROW TIRED, AND DISAPPEAR.

"Even now, after a year's run, I consider that, although I have made a good start, I need to make a better finish. All the members of my company work very hard with me to assist me in putting in new things and fresh 'business,' and in bringing the piece up to date. In fact, we are continually having rehearsals. People say in the papers I am the only man who can play the part of *Charley's Aunt*, but that isn't so. There are many who can do it. How do I account for that? Oh, there are many people

who can imitate but not create. When the play goes on tour, I do not anticipate any difficulty about my part. In fact, the gentleman who is to play the part in America is being 'coached' by me, and will have the whole business at his fingers' ends before he leaves London. The actor who will take my part in the provinces will be the best man I can get, and I shall also rehearse the part with him in every detail. Mr. Charles Frohman has purchased the American rights. Hitherto, the difficulty has been to find gentlemen to look the part of the old lady. There are numerous actors possessing the requisite skill, but most of them have played 'pantomime ladies,' and we don't want 'pantomime ladies' in *Charley's Aunt*."

BUT RETURN IN TIME TO WITNESS HIS TRIUMPH.

"How about managerial cares, Mr. Penley?"

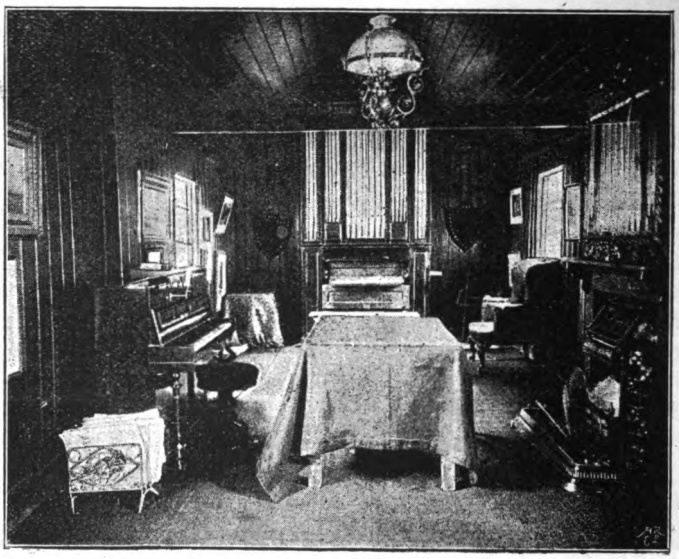
"Oh, it was not my ambition to become a manager any more than it was my ambition to become an actor. I dislike acting, and would give a good deal for a rest. I've arrived at that time of life when a rest would do me all the good in the world. Even with the success I have had, I don't know what I should do without my old friend Henry Dana to help me. He looks after the management, and I am free to do the work. The only letters I open are those marked private. Consequently, I need never spend my time in office work. I have received a great deal of loyal assistance from my company in most cases, and have made but few alterations in the caste since we began. I like the theatre, too. It has always had the pleasantest associations for me. But you'll never catch the train at this rate. We must turn back, and go down in the cart."

"*Sed revocare gradum!*" But we retrace our steps at length,

rush into the cart, and succeed in catching the train with two minutes to spare. As we shake hands at parting, I hazard one significant question. "Oh, eh—about receipts, Mr. Penley?"

THE DRAWING-ROOM.

"What about them?" queries Mr. Penley, carefully gathering up the reins, for his driving is unlike that of Jehu the son of Nimshi.

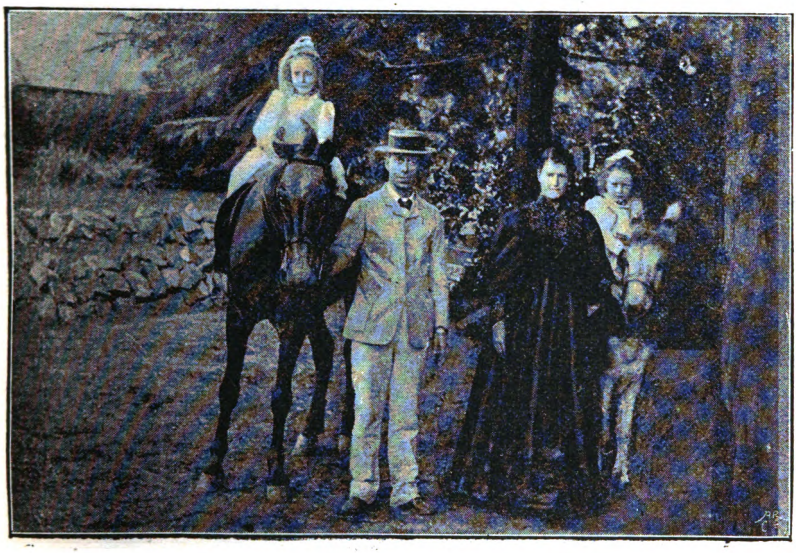


THE ORGAN ROOM

"Well, it it isn't indiscreet, may I know approximately what your takings are?"

Mr. Penley pauses a moment reflectively. "Oh, yes," he says calmly. "We have averaged a fraction under two hundred and thirty pounds a night since the theatre opened."

Two hundred and thirty pounds a night! And this without including American, colonial, and provincial rights. No wonder



MR. AND MRS. PENLEY.

men endure years of disappointment and waiting at managerial doors on the chance of reaping such a harvest. Unfortunately, they can't act in their own plays and make them the success they desire. Mr. Penley bears his good fortune very modestly, and ascribes most of it to the fact that he has a wide and varied following. Ninety-nine men out of a hundred would lose their heads under the circumstances. Mr. Penley takes the gifts of the gods, and is unaffectedly thankful.

Memoirs of a Female Nihilist.

By Sophie Wassilieff.

Illustrations by J. St. M. Fitz-Gerald.

V.—THE ROAD TO EXILE.

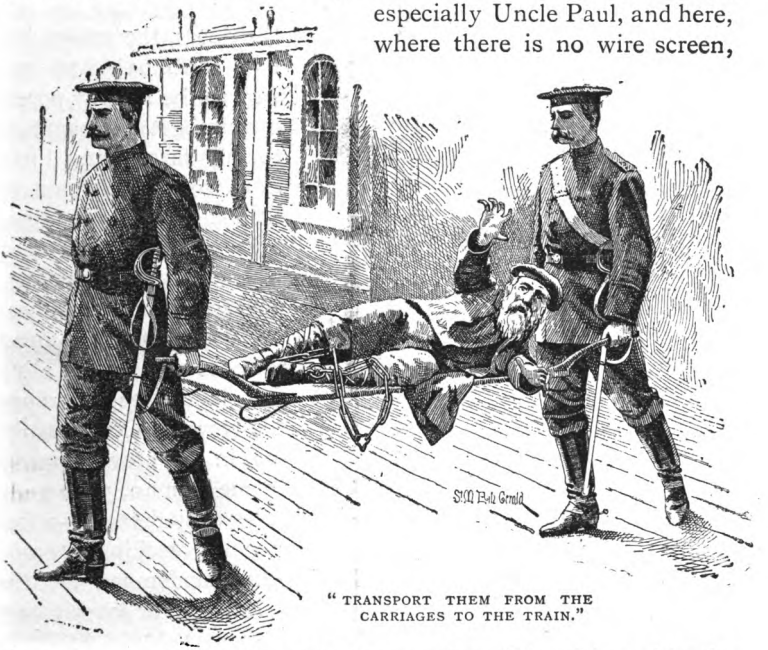
WE are now definitely on the road to Siberia. At the prison in Moscow, where we spend twelve days, several other groups of political prisoners join us. Amongst them are many prisoners condemned by different "Superior Courts." The greater number of these, men and women, are going to the convict prison at Kara. (1) Like the ordinary convicts, their hair is closely cropped under their uniform caps of grey cloth, and with little squares of red on the hood at the back of their uniforms, and chains on their hands and feet. Confined until the moment of their departure in special prisons, and severally closely watched in order to prevent any communication with parents or members of the Red Cross Society; reduced to the ordinary regimen of non-privileged prisoners, because a convict condemnation entails the loss of all rights and privileges; deprived of books and of all aid, they have been kept in this situation several months, some of them for several years, without being sent to the convict prison, where at least they would be alone, and where they would have the privilege of disposing of certain sums of money in order to obtain better food.

Amongst these unfortunates I find one of my friends, who, after her condemnation, has passed two years in a subterranean cell in the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul at St. Petersburg. She gives me a further explanation of this delay as follows: "I believe that they forget all about us." Ravaged by scurvy, chlorosis, rheumatism and consumption, many of them suffering from heart disease, nervous complaints, and affections of the eye, they are in such a state of weakness, that when the day arrives and our convoy is complete, and we are at last taken to the railway station, the guards are forced to put several of them on litters, and so to transport them from the carriages (2) to the train.

(1) Convict prison in Eastern Siberia.

(2) An ordinary carriage with closed windows and blinds down, attracting much less attention than the prison van, is generally used for the transport of political prisoners.

In this railway station, closed to travellers, surrounded on the outside by policemen and soldiers, and filled with soldiers and guards who are to accompany us, and whose number is almost equal to that of the condemned, I have an interview with my relations. These interviews with the condemned are rare, very rare, favours, only accorded to families having powerful relations in the official world. This permission has been obtained for himself and Aunt Vera by Uncle Paul of St. Petersburg, who is my guardian. It is such a long time since I have seen them, especially Uncle Paul, and here, where there is no wire screen,



"TRANSPORT THEM FROM THE CARRIAGES TO THE TRAIN."

where the guards, maddened by the number of the sick, and by the necessity for getting everybody into the carriages, and seeing to the baggage within a limited time, exercise only a careless watch over us, we have a quarter of an hour of almost perfect liberty for conversation. Of this liberty, however, we take but little advantage, for we are too much absorbed in the moving spectacle before us.

Under the domed roof of the railway station, which is lighted from above, surges a great crowd composed of two parties: one entirely grey, grey from head to feet, thanks to the prison uniform, which all the condemned wear on the road; the other light blue, the colour of which is thrown up by the silver frog-

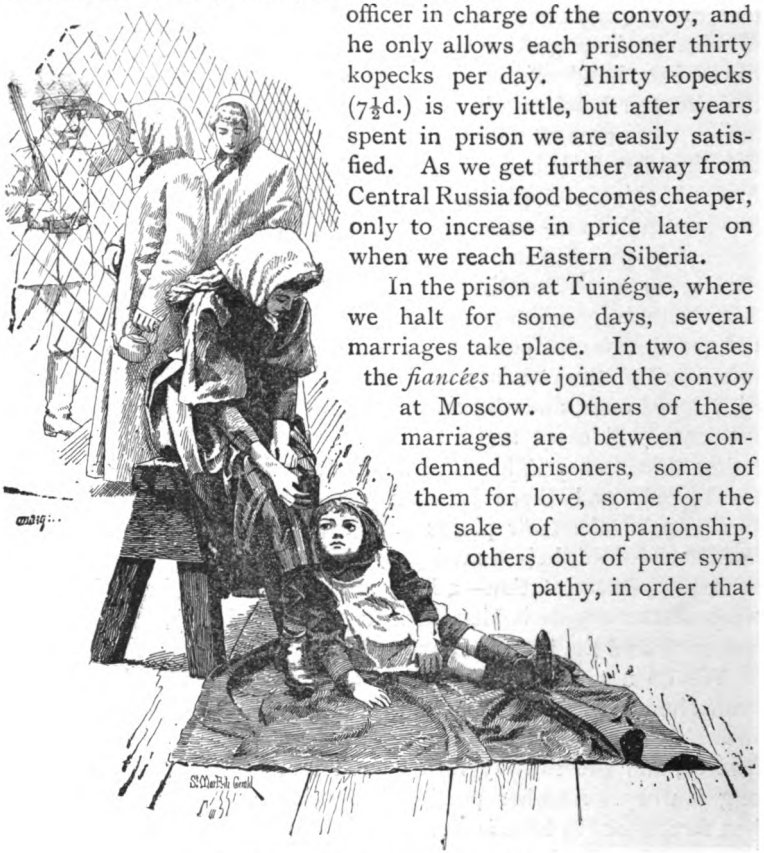
ging and the red lace of the uniforms. Towards the extremities of the great hall the crowd grows thinner, while, seated on the forms, are the sick and those happy ones who have been accorded an interview with their relatives. Around these favoured ones the comrades leave a vacant space, in order that the expressions of tenderness and the flow of tears may not be interrupted. More compact towards the centre and near the doors, the crowd here has continually to give way to the railway porters traversing it with baggage; to guards carrying litters from which chains are occasionally seen hanging over the side, and from whence come moans; while at other times a head is raised, as of the dead, the eyes alone being alive, and glancing eagerly round the crowd. Occasionally, too, in this crowd appears some woman, young and elegantly dressed—a free woman—seeking amongst the condemned for the husband or lover whom she has obtained permission to follow into exile. She will join the convoy, and, free and in good health, having the right to carry money and to write letters, will care for him on the road, and soften his privations and sufferings, as well as those of others. And now, bewildered by this great crowd, frightened by the spectacle so suddenly presented to her eyes, she searches for him for whom she has sacrificed all, searches without recognising him, until attracted by a gesture, by a voice, she falls in his arms with a great cry—a

A LAST INTERVIEW.

cry of joy at finding him again, a cry in which there is much of sadness and astonishment. To the strangeness of this moving scene is added that of the contrast in numerous details. By the side of these miserable grey hoods are seen rich furs, brought or sent at the last moment by the relatives of some condemned prisoner susceptible to the cold which awaits him towards the end of his long journey; then two arms are raised to Heaven in a gesture of appeal, and in close proximity to the heavy iron handcuffs, to which chains are attached, I notice on the skeleton hand a gold ring, that of marriage or betrothal. I notice, too, amongst these coarse grey uniforms, that more than one tired face is being wiped with handkerchiefs of fine cambric. And all this is dominated by the noise and confusion of the moving multitude — the murmur of hundreds of voices, cries and appeals, orders and counter-orders, the moans of the sick, the curses of the soldiers, the dull roll of truck-wheels heavily laden with baggage, the clatter of scabbards, the jingle of spurs, and the clanging of chains; the hoarse sobs of the men and the softer wail of the women who have come here for a last interview with loved ones, and the snorting of the engine which, in a few moments, will carry away the greater portion of those constituting this scene. Then the doors at each end of the carriage are locked, and those between the compartments are closed. The guards take their places near us, and the train, composed exclusively of third-class carriages, with closed windows and drawn blinds, leaves the station—a long prison on wheels, in which the noise of the engine is blended with moans and sobs, the clang of scabbards and the jingle of spurs.

We do not, however, continue to travel long in this stifling atmosphere and artificial twilight. Only when we are passing through towns or villages are the windows closed and the blinds lowered, and the railway forms but an unimportant part of our long journey. Another portion is by water, first on the Volga, then farther on, in Siberia, on the Ob. It is on a barge, one of those paddle-wheel barges which are either driven by their own engines or towed by steamers. The barge is perfectly flat, and divided by a light wooden trellis into two unequal parts. In the smaller division is a wooden erection intended for the women and the sick. The other portion has no roof, and on the deck, open to the sky, our male comrades sleep. In spite of the numerous inconveniences of this navigation, which in itself is a punishment, it is the best part of our interminable voyage. Our food,

too, is somewhat better, for here, as elsewhere, we political prisoners, when in groups, are in a position to impose our collective will. Therefore, when one of the inferior officers goes ashore for provisions we commission him to buy for us also. The sums which we are enabled to add to what the Government allows for our rations are only small, for all our money is in the hands of the officer in charge of the convoy, and he only allows each prisoner thirty kopecks per day. Thirty kopecks (7½d.) is very little, but after years spent in prison we are easily satisfied. As we get further away from Central Russia food becomes cheaper, only to increase in price later on when we reach Eastern Siberia.

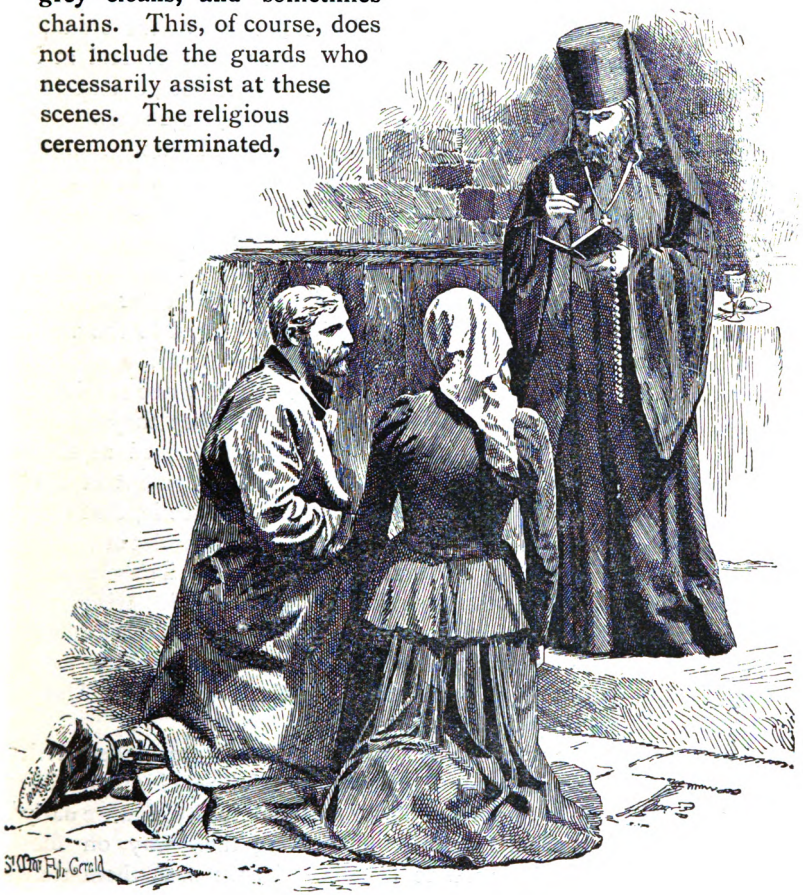


In the prison at Tuinégue, where we halt for some days, several marriages take place. In two cases the *fiancées* have joined the convoy at Moscow. Others of these marriages are between condemned prisoners, some of them for love, some for the sake of companionship, others out of pure sympathy, in order that

INSIDE WOMEN'S CAGE ON CONVICT BARGE.

a sick comrade, going into a half-savage country, may not die alone and unattended. In Russia, as elsewhere, the law wills it that a woman shall follow her husband. On the strength of this law the wives and *fiancées* of the condemned ask and obtain permission to follow them into exile. When it happens, however, that husband and wife are both prisoners, the man being condemned to exile in Western Siberia, whilst the woman is destined

for Eastern Siberia, the position is reversed, and the husband follows the wife. How sad and strange are these marriages, the consent to which is asked, not of the parents, but of the Minister of the Interior, and which are performed before a temporary altar in the Director's office, or in one of the cells, all those present, the principal actors in the scene, as well as the witnesses, wearing grey cloaks, and sometimes chains. This, of course, does not include the guards who necessarily assist at these scenes. The religious ceremony terminated,



A PRISON MARRIAGE.

the wife returns to the women's cell, and the husband to that reserved for the men, and they are not allowed to be together again until after arrival at their destination.

Some time after leaving Tomski we disembark, and take our

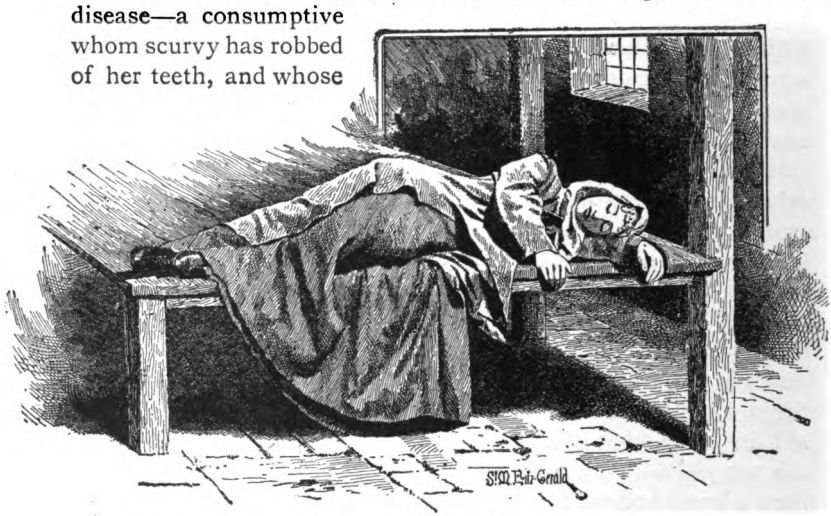
places in post carriages. They are open, and without springs. Two or three prisoners sit in the bottom of each carriage, and as many more guards and soldiers on the front seat and by the side of the driver; our portmanteaux are placed anywhere, under our feet, or behind us, and the carriage is full to overflowing. All day long we are obliged to sit motionless, without support for our aching backs. Each of these carriages is drawn by three vigorous post-horses, the middle one having upon his collar one or more small bells. The carriages follow closely one upon another, and at a rapid gallop, and as each bell has its own distinct note, the motion of the horses rings a monotonous cadence which, from morning to night, for days and weeks, echoes in our wearied ears. During the day we sometimes stop at a post-station, where the horses are changed, and we are served with tea. The nights we invariably spend at "etapes." By that time I am generally so tired and broken with fatigue that all appetite is gone, and I have not even the strength to change my garments. As soon as I enter the cell I throw myself on one of the long boards which, fixed to the wall, and ranged one above the other like the shelves of a cupboard, constitute our beds. At many of these prisons we leave comrades behind, some because they are so weak and ill that they cannot possibly go further, others because they have arrived at their destination, and will in a few hours be in the enjoyment of that comparative liberty accorded to those whose sentence is, that they shall live within the narrow limits of some small hamlet or village in Siberia. The filth and stench in these prisons is indescribable. There typhus rages even more fiercely than in the prisons of European Russia. Again I meet the grey shades, whose bloodless faces remind me of a partly-rotted potato, and as they salute us I notice their pallid lips move and hear the murmured "Those are not for here, only the others."

Amongst these unfortunates, many of whom are loaded with chains, are women tottering along with infants in their arms. Old men, too, form a large portion of the sad community, and we daily pass processions of this description making their way on foot along the interminable road to Siberia. As we pass them they envy us the rough carriages in which we are performing our journey. And so they march for days and weeks and months; in sunshine and shade, in snow and rain, in spite of sickness and hunger and weakness, on they march, under the whips of convict guards whose brutality still further aggravates their awful torture. Sometimes, however, women stand on their doorsteps and await

the opportunity of handing fresh home-made bread or pastry to the prisoners without caring for payment, and refusing, with a wave of the hand, the money held out to them. Or again, at night, especially in the villages near the forest, when the inhabitants, middle-class and peasant alike, barricade their doors—and they do it to some purpose in this country—there is placed on the outside window-sill a piece of bread, or of pork, or a small flask containing brandy—"for the fugitives."

As we advance into the country the hamlets and villages are wider apart, and to the eternal concert of the bells we traverse great plains, of which the soil is covered with lichen, and pass through immense forests. The road through the forest is covered with a thick layer of pine needles, which deadens the sound of the wheels, while under the natural arches formed by the interlacing branches, the bells give forth clear and silvery notes. Here the odour of pines is strong, and the air cold and humid. On every side are long avenues, and sometimes at nightfall between the columns is seen a moving shadow, which rapidly disappears as the convoy approaches. Man or wolf? The guards, with indifference, shrug their shoulders, and while my eyes follow the fugitive shadow, which reappears at intervals, my heart is filled with agony at the thought of the fate awaiting the unfortunate—if it be one—who, at the risk of his life, is making an attempt to reach home and liberty. Fed by that timid charity which at nightfall places a repast on the window-sill in order that the fugitive may not enter the house and ask more—will he attain the end he has in view? Or, lost in these almost endless forests, will he die of cold and hunger, or fall a prey to the wolves? Will he succeed in avoiding the Samoyedes, or other representatives of the native populations, whose opposition to Russian invasion consisted in flight, and who have taken nothing from civilisation save a wild passion for alcohol, to satisfy which they do not hesitate to kill man and beast, and thereby aid the police, whom they hate with all the strength of their debased natures? Will the fugitive, who now weeps and now dreams of home and freedom, escape them or die at their hands? Should the latter be his fate, then these human wolves, having obtained their object, will quietly return towards their tents, and in an improvised eulogy, they, the deformed dwarfs, will tell the giants of the forest how the Samoyedes have killed the Russian, how they have robbed his dead body, and how with the plunder they are going to procure good brandy.

Through the limitless plains, as under the forest arches, the bells tinkle, tinkle, tinkle always. Bewildered by extreme fatigue, numbed by the cold, I become possessed by a vague idea, or rather sensation, that I shall for ever travel thus through space to the eternal accompaniment of tinkling bells. Then a day comes when it is my turn to be left behind at an "etape" in Eastern Siberia. In the cell where I am to rest I find two other female political prisoners, who, like me, have been left on the road. One of them is just recovering from typhus, contracted on the road, but her convalescence is slow, and threatens to end in a relapse. The other is a consumptive, and in the last stages of that fell disease—a consumptive whom scurvy has robbed of her teeth, and whose



"LEFT BEHIND."

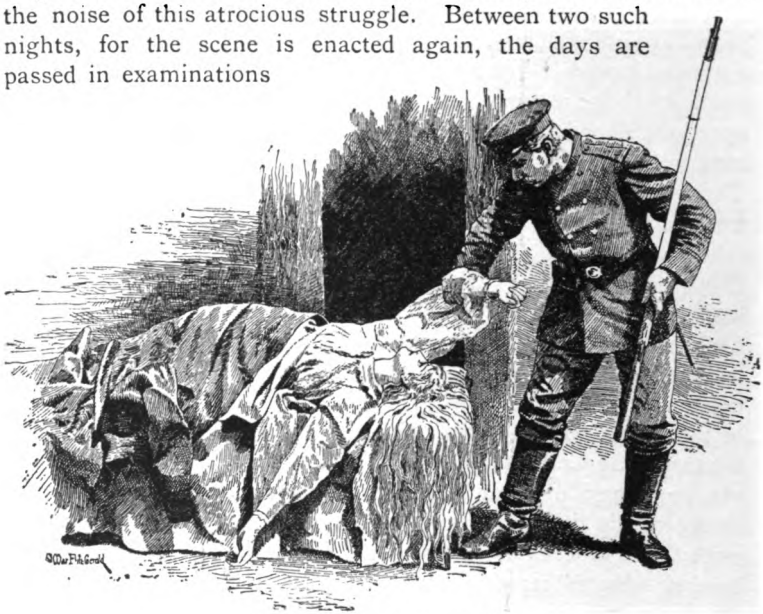
empty gums bleed even at the contact of bread soaked in milk. In the prison there are also some fifteen male prisoners, who because of illness have been abandoned by their convoys. Then there are exiles who, for longer or shorter periods, have lived within the town limits, and who now find themselves in prison because of some offence against the regulations. There are also some few of the townspeople imprisoned because they are suspected of a leaning towards revolutionary ideas. To my two companions, more seriously ill than myself, I assume my old *rôle* of nurse, as I formerly did for Nathalie. A little reading, a little needlework, and so the day passes. But the evenings! the nights! so long, so infinitely long in this septentrional country,

and during which here, as in all non-preventive prisons, we are left without light. These hours of darkness, which later on the Aurora Borealis will sometimes break and flood our cell with its multicolored fires, these interminable hours of night, here, as in the fortress of X——, are spent in conversations and memories and dreams. But conversations with my two companions are short and far from gay, for their weakness will not permit of even the exertion of a long conversation.

By-and-bye these memories and dreams are replaced by a reality sadder and more atrocious than anything I have imagined. One night the captain of the local yeomanry, accompanied by yeomanry and soldiers, suddenly enters the cells in order to make a general search. Here it is not only the portmanteaux and their contents that are examined, but pillows and mattresses are torn open, the floor-boards are raised, the bricks forming the stove are removed, and the prisoners are hustled and otherwise illtreated. The search is one such as I have not before witnessed, and it freezes me with fear and stupor. The next day our books are taken away; the right to spend our money, deposited at the Record Office of the prison, is withdrawn, and we are not allowed to write letters or receive anything from outside excepting food and necessaries. These measures taken, without our knowing what has provoked them, we are for some days left in peace, in order to inspire us with confidence and lead us to imagine that all is ended, or possibly because further orders have not been received from the Governor-General of Eastern Siberia. During these few days' respite, many male and female prisoners are brought in—exiles living within the town limits, and a few natives. Corresponding with them by means of signs, we learn that the administration having adopted repressive measures towards the exiles living in the town, the latter have protested. That searches have been made and letters discovered, proving that outside of those which, according to the regulations, had passed the Public Censor, others had been received, though how is unknown; that the exiles are in communication with the prisoners in the local prison, and both receive letters from and write to them.

A week later, and then Captain *Z*—— and his "tools of the law" reappear to recommence searches. The prisoners, surprised in the middle of the night, are made to quit their beds, and, without being allowed time to dress, are dragged into the court-yard; whilst, in their absence, the search goes on. At the same time another detachment, commanded by Captain *Z*——, forces the

prisoners to submit to a personal examination. And as they resist and defend themselves, there are in the court-yard, lighted by the moon and the guards' lanterns, cries and groans, and unequal struggles between robust armed soldiers and weak, defenceless prisoners; struggles hand to hand, where half-naked bodies writhe in the snow under the soldiers' blows, or are forced against the walls of the prison yard. I and my two companions are spared this indignity, for we are on the sick list, and nothing "forbidden" has been found in our cell. It is, therefore, only from a distance that, trembling and exasperated, we listen to the noise of this atrocious struggle. Between two such nights, for the scene is enacted again, the days are passed in examinations



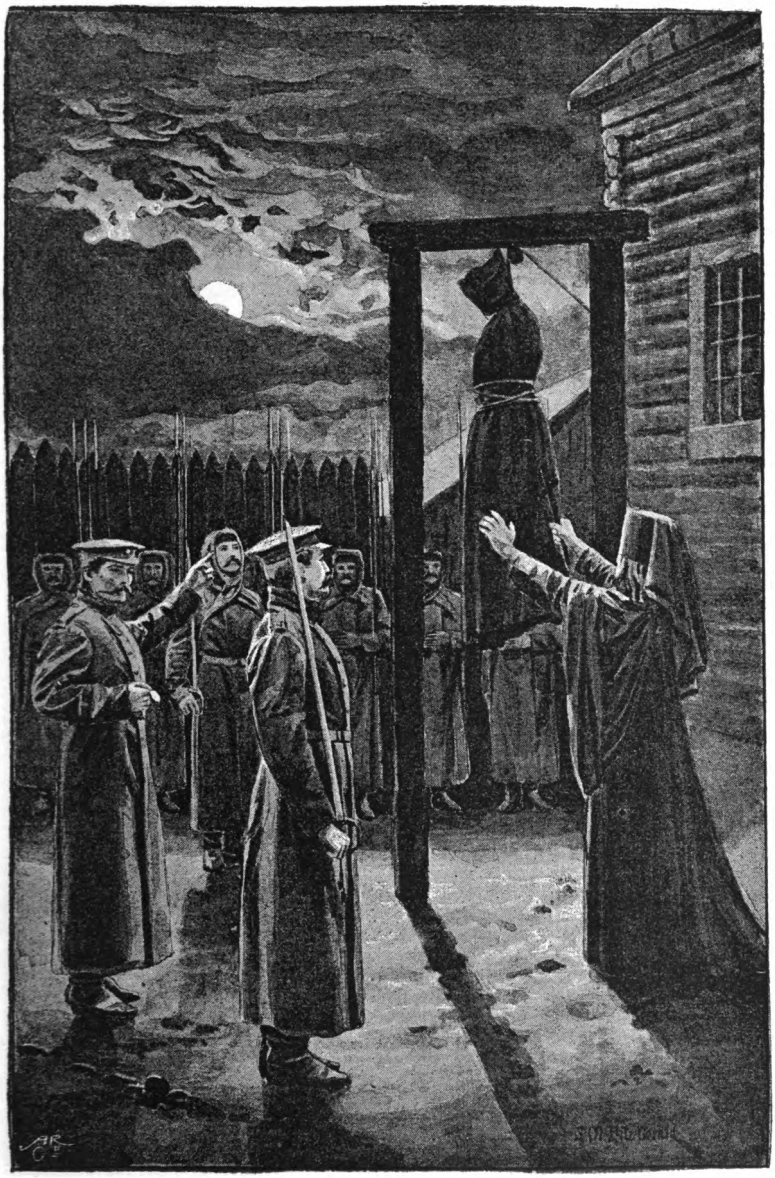
"MADE TO QUIT THEIR BEDS."

which, without Judge or Procurer, are carried out with nameless brutality by Captain *Z*——. The examinations turn on our relations with the exiles in the town, the means adopted for sending and receiving letters, and the existence of the Red Cross Society, the names and addresses of the members of which we are asked to reveal. How long these atrocious nights and terrible days endure I know not. For me they have passed in a sort of fever, thanks to which they are confused in my memory, and even at this distance of time I shudder to think of them, and dare not attempt to recall the details.

One day we learn that a court-martial has been called for the purpose of judging those who are accused of having had clandestine relations with the exiles and with members of the Red Cross Society, with having disobeyed orders, with having resisted the soldiers and guards, and having wounded some of them during the resistance. None of these accusations touch myself and comrades, and once more we escape. The comedy is neither long nor complicated. A few officers acting as judges meet together in the Record Office of the prison. Captain Z—— and a few guards are the only witnesses. The accused, in chains, are taken back to their cells each time they attempt to protest against the irregularity and iniquity of this tribunal, then two hours later the sentences—several of hard labour and one of death. The verdicts are submitted to the Governor-General of Eastern Siberia, who has the power to pardon. This power nobody asks him to exercise, and here, where the Government has no need to trouble itself with regard to public opinion, nobody expects him to exercise it spontaneously. Yes! nobody, not even me! And yet even to the end I am incapable of believing in these atrocities, of which I have seen so many examples, and of which I am quite sure. Yet, to the last moment, deep down in my heart, there remains a ray of wild hope, just enough to maintain the fever in my veins, to make me start at the least noise of footsteps on the snow, in the court-yard, or in the corridors. This awful waiting, full of a mortal agony, I know only too well; I learned to understand it at the bed-

"GAZING AT THE GREAT DOOR IN THE COURT-YARD."

side of the dying Nathalie. There, at least, I had work to do to combat my anxiety, and a continuous struggle filling up the hours and using up my nervous forces. Here, nothing of the kind exists, no struggle is possible, and I spend my days, and the greater part of my nights, partly in feverishly pacing up and down our cell, and partly in sitting on the window-sill gazing at the great door in the court-yard, through which, always and in spite of everything, I hope to see enter the messenger of mercy. At last, one day my anxiety augments. Something strange is taking place in the prison. Captain *Z* ——, whose harsh voice there is no mistaking, is rushing up and down the corridors. In the outer court-yard, on which my window opens, I notice several unknown men and a few ordinary prisoners sweeping away the snow; then, towards the evening, the number of soldiers, so numerous in the corridors since the first search, is doubled. These movements, which I dare not make known to my companions, frighten me. Are they the forerunners of another search? or is it something else? At night the prison returns to its habitual silence, but my anxiety once awakened I cannot sleep, and, sitting on the side of my bed, I pass several hours in darkness, listening intently for any noise, and hearing nothing save a few short moans from my sleeping companions, the rattle of sword-scabbards and jangle of spurs, immediately suppressed, and the tumultuous beatings of my agonised and appalled heart. Towards morning, however, fatigue and fever overcome me and I sleep. How long have I slept? The noise of the beating of a drum, near at hand, causes me to start to my feet, suddenly awakened, and as yet hardly conscious where the nightmare ends and the reality commences. By force of habit I walk to the other end of the cell and mount on the window-sill, and my eyes instinctively turn towards the extremity of the court-yard, where is the great door. Day is breaking, and the first thing I distinguish, from my position on the first floor, is a forest of bayonets, of which the points, in the chiaro-oscuro, reflect a dull light. Below the bayonets, the uniform of guards and soldiers standing motionless as statues. Then, in advance of these, and nearer to me, the brighter uniform of the officers. Next, I notice a tall, dark form holding in its hand a black crucifix, then three heavy beams forming a sort of large doorway—the gateway of eternity. Depending from the cross-beam of this opening I notice what appears to be a long and shapeless grey sack, agitated by convulsive movements,



"THE GATEWAY OF ETERNITY."

running through its entire length. All this scene, somewhat vague, thanks to the dim light of the falling snow, is so short that my brain, hardly awakened, fails to appreciate what my eyes behold. It is only the aspect of the long sack, which I now know to be the uniform worn by those condemned to death, and the movement by which it is agitated, which definitely enlightens me as to what has just taken place. A wild cry escapes from my breast. At the same time I instinctively throw out my arms to help a dying comrade, and before this movement the thick glass of the window gives way and falls into the court-yard. Through the aperture enters a glacial air, bringing with it flakes of snow, the noise of a drum, the nasal and monotonous tones of a priest reciting the prayers for the dying, and, above all, the long rattle of one dying by strangulation. This, too, like previous visions, passes like a flash, for, fainting, I slip back and fall on the floor of the cell.

I have never known the comrade executed under my window, and the execution has been for me only a vague and rapid vision, of which I have involuntarily seen only the chief outlines. Besides, all that is so far off! far in space—far in time! For over the unknown and solitary grave of the prisoner, where the hurricane alone weeps, and the Aurora Borealis flashes its multicolored lights, there have passed many and terrible Siberian winters. And yet, it only needs the beat of a drum suddenly heard in the twilight, or any noise, to recall the death-rattle heard in the court-yard. Sometimes, the mention of the name of the town where all these awful events took place is enough to make me live again all the agonies and sufferings of that distant time. Let us speak no more of it, friends.

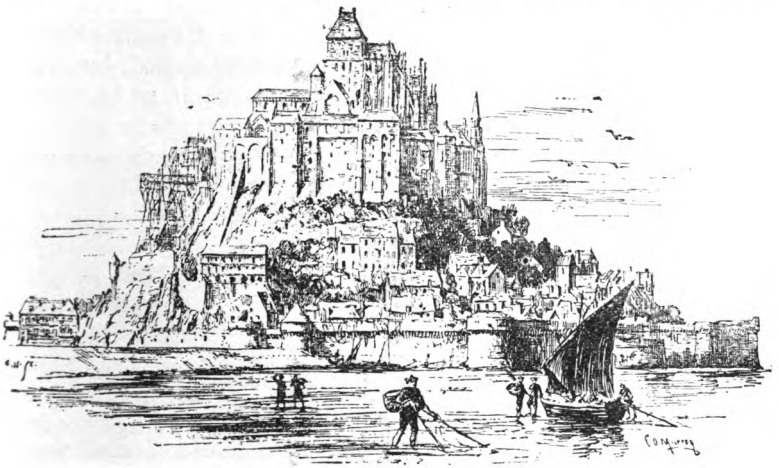
(To be continued.)

Mont St. Michel.

By Robert Barr.

Illustrations by C. O. Murray.

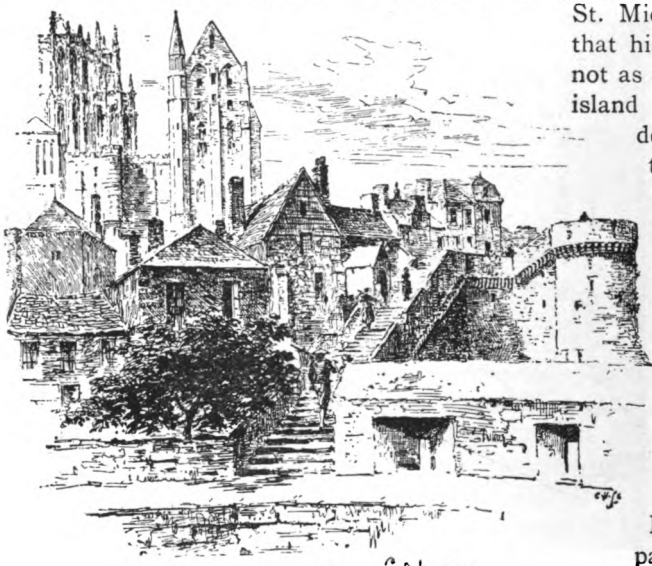
HOW few of us sympathise with the devil! We have nothing but hard things to say of him; we give little thought, and less sympathy, to his trials and tribulations. As an energetic, daring, and capable builder, he would have made a name for himself that might be envied by any architect in the world. Yet, nevertheless, his talent and industry have brought the devil nothing but disappointment and disaster. The Devil's Bridge near



MONT ST.. MICHEL.

Andermatt, before it fell into the torrent, was a most marvellous erection of stone in an almost impossible place. It was a model to bridge-builders all over the world, and its originality and daring were recognised even by the most envious of bridge architects. Yet what did the devil receive for his pains? Merely a useless and probably vicious dog, not worth the tax which would have to be paid upon him in any civilised country. The devil built the bridge on the understanding that he was to possess the first living thing that crossed. Now, instead of the Swiss sacrificing one of their number, which was at least the spirit, if not the letter, of the contract, they sent over a dog when the bridge was finished! The devil also built, or at least drew the plans for, one of the most marvellous cathedrals in the world, and yet in the end he was cheated out of his pay.

But probably the meanest trick that was ever played on the devil was the one which resulted in the building of the Mont St. Michel. The devil owned the little rocky island that rises through the sand near the Normandy coast. It was a most desirable bit of rock, because part of the time one could walk dryshod on the shore, while the rest of the twenty-four hours one could go in a boat. St. Michael owned a piece of property known as the island of Tourmelane, which is situated a mile or so from the devil's real estate, but which is never left high and dry by the retreating tide. It was not nearly so valuable a piece of property as Mont St. Michel.



ON THE WALLS.

St. Michael well knew that his possession was not as desirable as the island owned by the devil, so he often tried to get his Satanic Majesty to change islands, but the devil would not hear of it. At last St. Michael made this proposal to him. He said, "You build a palace on your island, and I will build a palace on mine. They must be built in a single night, and we will both stand on the Normandy coast and view the new buildings. Then, if I erect a finer building than you do, I am to have the privilege of exchanging my palace for yours."

"Ah," said the devil, who was naturally suspicious, having been cheated so often before, "but who is to judge which is the finer building?"

"You shall be the judge," said St. Michael.

That seemed all right, so the devil began his work. St. Michael also had no time to lose, and in the morning the two stood together on the Normandy coast and viewed the palaces. The devil was astonished when he saw the lovely building St. Michael had erected. It shone in the morning sun like crystal.

It was the most beautiful thing the devil had ever seen. His own building, grand as it undoubtedly was, seemed dull and tame compared with the fairy palace of crystal which St. Michael had set on his bit of land. St. Michael was very proud of his building; he rubbed his hands in glee and said, "I thought I would show you a thing or two in the way of house architecture." The devil admitted that he had seen nothing so beautiful in his life. He said, "I suppose you will not keep your bargain of yesterday. You will not exchange your palace for mine?"

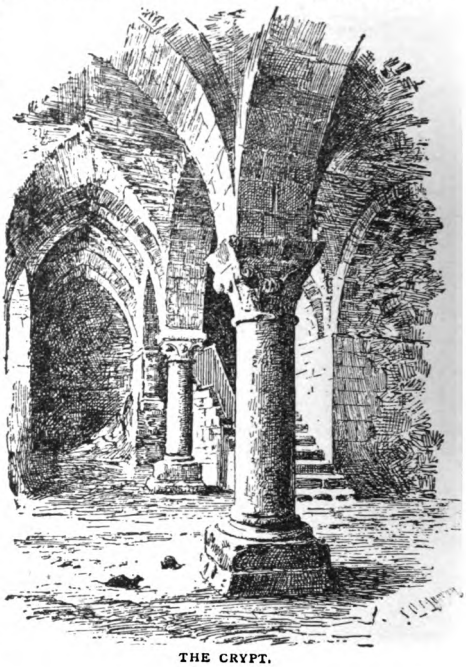
"Oh, yes, I will," said St. Michael.

Accordingly the exchange was made, and the papers were legally drawn up by a Norman notary. But, alas! before the sun had reached the meridian the palace of St. Michael had melted away. He had built it of ice, and that evening the devil found himself in possession of merely the rock of Tourmelane, with some loose pieces of ice upon it. The devil's building had been honest, and St. Michael certainly got the best of the bargain. I understand that St. Michael stands very high in saintly annals, but it seems to me that this act of his qualifies him to be the patron saint of all down-east Yankees, for it was a trick worthy of the state that produces the wooden nutmeg. Montreal might claim St. Michael as the patron saint of that beautiful city, as the first builder of an ice palace, or the jerry-builders of London may well have a friendly leaning towards St. Michael, whose house lasted barely six hours.

THE INNER GATEWAY.

Until recent years, Mont St. Michel was sometimes in Normandy and sometimes in Brittany. It all depended on which side of it flowed the river which issues from the land at this point. The stream divides Normandy from Brittany, and it had the habit of going sometimes on one side of the mountain and sometimes on the other. When it flowed to the east of Mont St. Michel

the mountain was in Brittany; when on the west the mountain was in Normandy. Now the French have stopped all that, and have destroyed much of the picturesqueness of Mont St. Michel by building an ugly viaduct from the shore to the citadel, so that the river can no longer change its mind, but must keep the western channel. The new roadway is as straight and devoid of grace as a French engineer can make it. In the olden time a person visited Mont St. Michel by tramping over the sands, and as there was always a chance of being caught by the tide the trip did not have the prosaic dulness it has to-day.



THE CRYPT.

Beyond giving a true and faithful account of the building of Mont St. Michel, I shall endeavour, as far as possible, to furnish no information in this article. There is too much information abroad anyhow. The guide-books are full of it, and learned people have written articles until now there is no restful spot in Europe that is not contaminated with measurements, and objectionable historical statistics. When a man looks at Mont St. Michel on a fine moonlight night, the gloom hiding the objectionable hotel signs, while the silvery illumination brings out all the details of the beautiful architecture of the place. he does not wish to be troubled

THE GRAND STAIRCASE.

with dates or measurements. Measurements are an impertinence, more especially when they are in French nomenclature. Metres, or kilometres, or centimetres, mean nothing to an Englishman, and he cannot bring himself to regard them seriously. The human mind has its limitations, and a person must resolve foreign figures into his own vernacular before they have any meaning for him. Thus it happens that measurements are doubly an impertinence at a place like Mont St. Michel.

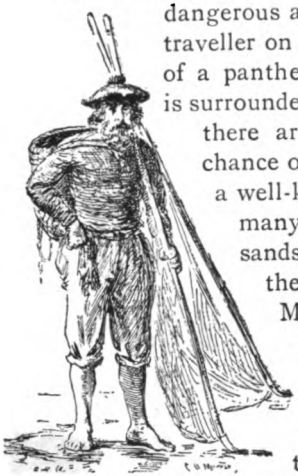
THE IRON CAGE.

It is difficult to believe that the curious combination of natural and architectural beauty which Mont St. Michel presents could be more effectively seen than on a clear night with the moon at full, yet I had once a view of the place that was dramatic in its startling effectiveness. It was a cloudy day, and a black storm was rising from the English coast, and darkening the land of France. As seen from the shore, Mont St. Michel was almost swallowed up in the universal gloom. The Channel was grey and angry-looking; the background of clouds was black, when suddenly a rift appeared for a moment in the sky to the south, and a ray of sunshine struck down on Mont St. Michel alone. The ancient fortress and cathedral stood out in the white sunlight as if nothing existed on the earth but itself. The effect was most theatrical, and one almost expected to hear the hiss of the limelight.

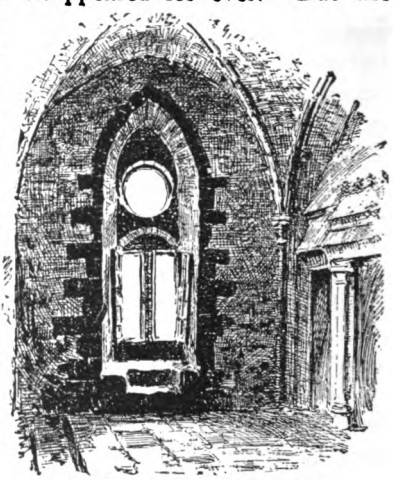
IN THE SALLE DES CHEVALIERS.

The silence of the place at night is very restful to a tired man from the noise of London. It is pleasant to have a room which is above the walls, overlooking the almost limitless expanse of sand. At night the tide steals in very quietly with a soothing murmur and envelops the place. Then there are miles of water instead of miles of sand. The effect is as if a person were on board an ironclad that had sprung a leak, and was gradually sinking as the

water rose around it. But although the tide at Mont St. Michel seems so soothing and comforting, it is really as deadly and dangerous as the plague. It steals upon an incautious traveller on the sands with the stealth and noiselessness of a panther, slinking from rock to rock until the victim is surrounded. Then he is doomed, for most of the sands there are quicksands, and they give a person no chance of escape. The Marquis of Tourmelane, once a well-known inhabitant of Mont St. Michel, told me many a gruesome story of those disasters on the sands. Mr. C. O. Murray has drawn a picture of the Marquis, and everyone who has visited Mont St. Michel will at once recognise that noted character. The Marquis was said to be insane, but he was at least very harmless. The title, I imagine, was given to him in derision, but he was very proud of it. He told me of a celebrated artist from Paris who set up his easel in order to paint Mont St. Michel, and the tide stole round him, and at last began to lick his feet. The frightened artist tried to escape, but the sands had him, and before help could come he had disappeared for ever. But the Marquis claimed that the tide was kind to those who knew its ways. He said he had been all over the great stretch of sand for a score of years, and had never come to harm. He made his living by catching shrimps, and knew well the tide and its habits. After my talk with the Marquis, I went to Paris, and was in the big city a week. Going along the Boulevards one morning, I saw a picture in one of the penny illustrated papers. I was at once interested on noticing that Mont St. Michel was the subject of the illustration. On looking closer I found that my old friend, the Marquis of Tourmelane, was represented as lying among the rocks—dead. He had trusted once too often to his treacherous friend the sea.

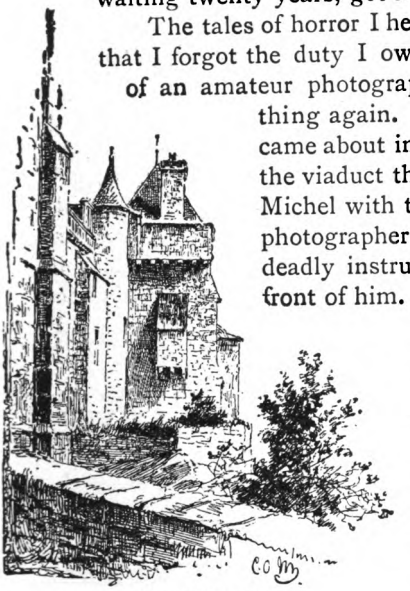


"THE MARQUIS."



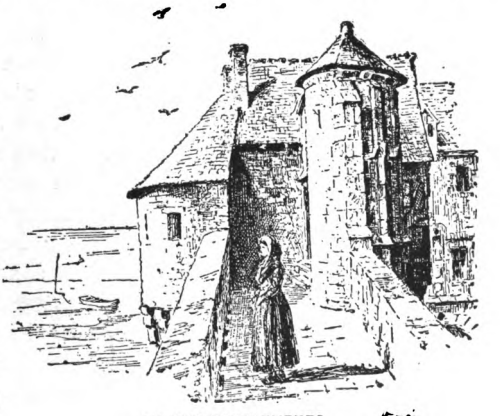
WINDOW ON THE GRAND STAIR.

His picturesque figure, long hair, and shrimping net, will no more form a unique feature on those spreading sands. The tide, after waiting twenty years, got him at last.



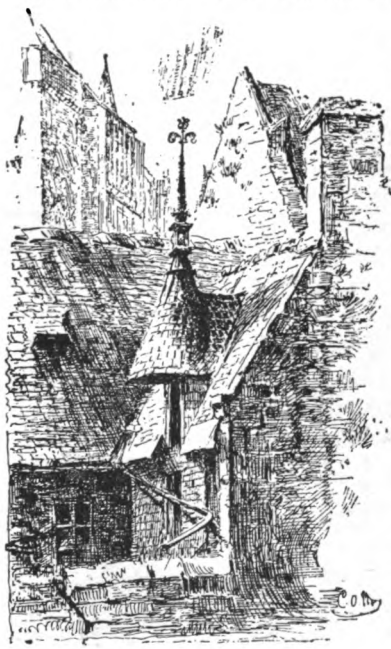
ON THE RAMPARTS.

The tales of horror I heard about the tide so impressed me that I forgot the duty I owe to humanity and saved the life of an amateur photographer. I shall never do such a thing again. Besides, he was not grateful. It came about in this way. I was lounging along the viaduct they have built to connect Mont St. Michel with the shore when I saw an amateur photographer out on the sands focussing his deadly instrument on the architectural pile in front of him. He was absorbed in his nefarious occupation, and did not notice that the tide was coming in. As it turned out, that was his first day at Mont St. Michel, as also it was mine. The tide runs in like a racehorse along the viaduct first, and then gradually spreads over the outlying sands. Its gentle ripple at my feet first called my attention to the danger. Instantly, with the foolish hurry of an excitable man, without giving one thought to the question, "Is an amateur photographer worth saving?" I shouted to him, and warned him of his danger. He cast one brief glance around him, and at once took in the situation. With the ruling passion strong in death, he tried at first to save his camera. He was 500 feet or so from the roadway, on a long stretch of very dry sand, into which he sank at every step up to the knees. This greatly retarded his speed, especially as the loose legs of the tripod were acting badly, tripping



ON THE BATTLEMENTS.

him up whenever they could. Again I shouted, and advised him to throw away the camera and save himself. He threw it away, and ran as well as he could, but he was no match for the flowing tide. He soon saw that it was impossible for him to distance it and get around on the road past the head of the incoming current. The stream between him and the road began to get wider and wider. He paused for one awful moment on its edge, and then plunging, managed to reach the side of the embankment, where I helped to haul him up on dry land. He sank down exhausted, and murmured fervent thanks to Providence for his escape, at the same time wringing my hand and calling down blessings on my head because of my assistance. Some visitors who had seen the plunge and the desperate swim now came running up.



DORMER WINDOWS IN THE VILLAGE.

"What possessed you to do a thing like that without taking your clothes off?" asked one.

"Clothes?" cried the exasperated photographer. "There was no time to think of clothes."

"Yes, but the bathing place is around behind the Mount. Why did you jump in here? You have ruined that suit."

We both looked in astonishment at the heartless visitors. I was about to inform them that it was not the time to talk of clothes when lives were in danger, but one of them, spying the camera on the sands, said:

"Perhaps you were not aware that the water never covers those sands except when there are spring tides. Besides, you might have walked through this stream. It does not reach above the knees."

The amateur photographer at this turned upon me and accused me of knowing these facts all the time. He was most unreasonable about the matter. He said he could stand a joke as well as the next man, but this was going a trifle too far, as I would find to my cost. He threw off his coat, and I thought at

first it was merely to dry the garment, but when I saw his intentions were not honourable I walked away. I am no pugilist.

Once on a time there was but one hotel on the island; now there are six, three owned by one family and three by another. The families do not love each other, and when a 'bus comes in, the bewildered passengers, who are new to the place, are almost torn apart in rivalry for the possession of them.

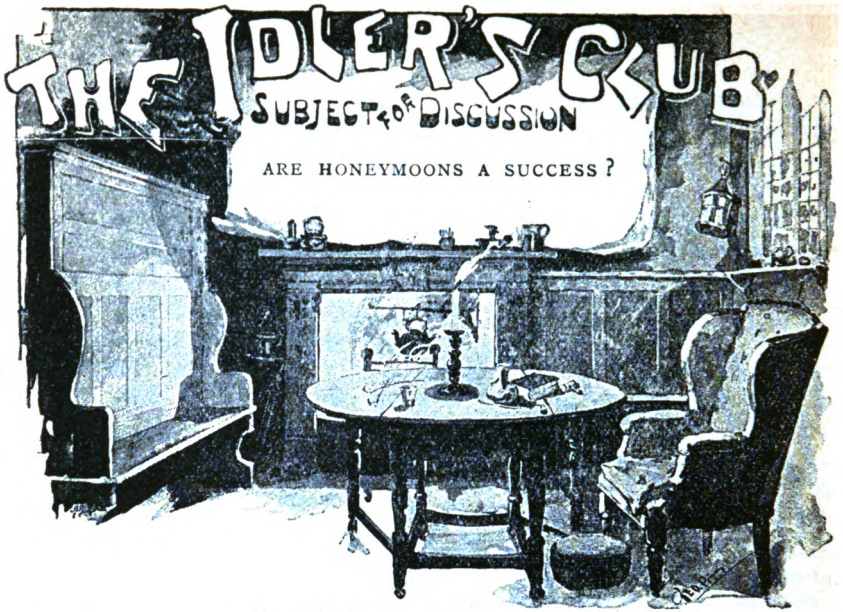
When there was but one hotel the humble proprietor thereof founded an omelette. A Paris journalist, happening to meet that omelette when he was very hungry, or perhaps jaded with Parisian cooking, wrote an enthusiastic account of it in a Paris paper. The Mont St. Michel omelette became instantly famous. On each of the six hotels there is a sign to this effect, "Here only can be obtained the justly-renowned veritable omelette." I have met and conquered the omelette at each of the six hotels, but, as Mark Twain said about the jumping frog, I see no points about that omelette different from any other well-behaved omelette.

To sum up, Mont St. Michel is a most unique and picturesque place at which to spend, say, one day and one night. If you stay longer it palls upon you, and you get tired of the word omelette.

I have endeavoured to say nothing at all about the illustrations that accompany this text, as I think pictures should speak for themselves, and no pictures are better qualified to do their own talking than those drawn by so celebrated an etcher as Mr. C. O. Murray.

Meanwhile, if any scrap of useful information has crept into this article, it only goes to show that, no matter how careful a man is, he cannot quite achieve what he sets out to accomplish.

CHAPEL OF ST. AUBERT.



Geo. R. Sims hesitates.

To ask if honeymoons are a success looks suspiciously like putting the question, "Is Marriage a Failure?" another way round. An unmarried man would hesitate to reply until he had consulted his circle of married acquaintances. No single man can be expected to have much personal experience of the subject to speak from. I am a bold man in many things, but I hesitate to go to the young married couples of my acquaintance and ask them point-blank if they enjoyed their honeymoons, and so I *must* fall back upon the only one of which I have any personal experience. There were difficulties in the way of that honeymoon. The marriage was a very quiet one, and *he* undertook to see to everything. Among other things he looked out the train in Bradshaw, and, being (naturally) somewhat absent-minded at the time, he didn't take care to see that it was the current Bradshaw, and so, when the newly-married couple arrived at Charing Cross, the train was just starting, and *he*, forgetting everything but the danger of being left behind, dashed madly up the platform, dragging the poor little bride after him, a fat and perspiring porter following with the light luggage. The young couple were flung into a third-class carriage, by a friendly guard, as the train was on the move, but the porter dropped *his* dressing-bag, and it burst open on the platform, and brushes and combs, and razors, and all manner of useful things were scattered in every direction. Before they could be picked up the train had steamed out of the station, and he sat for three-quarters of an hour in a third-class smoking carriage,

with a scowl upon his brow, endeavouring to check the word which kept rising to his lips, but which he felt would be distinctly out of place on his marriage day. That's how the only honeymoon that I really know much about commenced. It wasn't quite a success at the start.

* * * *

There was trouble at the hotel.

I think there was trouble at the hotel. The young couple were put into a room, with a chimney that smoked, and it was very cold weather, and a fire was absolutely necessary, for you don't want your teeth to chatter at the commencement of your honeymoon. Chattering teeth don't go with an eloquent silence, and gazing into each other's eyes. The smoke was so awful that every now and then the window had to be opened to let it out, and, through opening the window, the wind came in, and blew the toilet glass over and broke it, and that's bad luck for seven years, and the bride began to cry. It's such *very* bad luck to begin your honeymoon with a broken glass. And it was two days before the dressing-bag, and the other bags, arrived, through a muddle at the other end, and, though they were both amiable young people, it upset him terribly to have to part his hair with a lucifer match, and brush it with his slippers, especially at the beginning of married life, because that's just when you want to look your best. The first dinner was rather a worry, too, I think. There was a fowl, and *he* never could carve fowls, but was too proud to say so, and somehow the bird, though dead, flew off the dish on to the tablecloth, and the gravy—well, he couldn't imagine where all the gravy in that dish came from, but he knew where it went to, and so did *she*, and *she* bit her pretty lip, and looked at her pretty frock, and if *he* hadn't got up and kissed her there and then, I think she would have cried. And then the hotel! But dear, dear, it's all so long ago, and I've forgotten a great deal that I—that I was *told*, but whether that honeymoon was a success or not, I am sure that *he* would give all that he has in the world now to have it over again. So it couldn't have been quite a failure.

* * * *

Zangwill says they are.

The question, "Are honeymoons a success?" is surely one to put to the married, or, rather, to those who have been married several times, for one ought not to generalise from a single instance (or should I say a married instance?) For my own part, I am, and always have been, a bachelor, and can only speak from observation. I have had to go to other sources for real information on the interesting issue raised in the Idlers' Club. I have interviewed hotel-keepers, waiters, porters, milliners. One and all assure me that the honeymoon is a huge success. They say no married couple should be without it. I do not think they are all entirely swayed by mercenary considerations. As the delightful Lickcheese of

Shaw's *Widowers' Houses* said, when he wanted to unite a couple in the bonds of marriage and a fraudulent conspiracy against the County Council, "Why not have a bit of romance in business, when it costs nothing? We all have our feelings; we ain't mere calculating machines." Think of the touch of romance the advent of the ingenuous couple brings into lives otherwise sordid and prosaic. The stern, corduroy-clad porter dreams of his wife and the bairns at home, and his eye softens with emotion as he wheels their luggage into the wrong van. Think, too, of the secret joys of "spotting" the brand-new pair. The two are invariably on their guard against detection; short of touring apart, like the famous Irish couple, they do all in their power to conceal the glittering newness of the chain that binds them; to hide the fact that they are but *parvenus* in matrimonial circles. But old habit is too strong. Every now and again they show the cloven hoof—instead of the united. Mrs. Jones does not know how many pieces of sugar Mr. Jones takes in his tea; and he, for his part, observes that he will take sole and Miss Brown salmon. Which is awkward. But the wily waiter's eye twinkles. Even a Scotch waiter does not have his doubts about Miss Brown. Who would rob him of this innocent pleasure? Consider—he has to wear a dress coat and a stiff breastplate all day long.

* * * *

Important to Idlers.

There is another point of view. The male marriageable population of Britain consists of several millions, mostly *employés*. To them a honeymoon means a fortnight's holiday and more, rising according to the importance of the work the man does. By an odd accident, the bride always names the happy day at a period not already given over to holiday-making. Thus the lucky bridegroom secures an extra vacation. In these restless times that is no small matter—a week at the seaside may prevent a collapse of one's health, it may save a man's brain from breakdown. To get a fortnight's idlesse in glorious midsummer is well worth marriage. I am convinced that if honeymoons were abolished the marriage-rate would go down by leaps and bounds. Many a girl is married to make a bridegroom's holiday. It is a great pity that polygamy was ever abolished—it might have meant extra holidays every year, and perhaps two in good seasons. We work much too hard, we are all in a state of nervous strain, and if our feverish civilisation is not to culminate in universal paralysis, our statesmen had better see to bringing back polygamy before it is too late. This is of far greater importance than Home Rule, and Liberal Unionists will welcome it with open arms. Judging, therefore, entirely from my own inexperience, I am driven to the conclusion that honeymoons are a great success—hygienically—and that the only drawback to their usefulness is that there are

not enough of them. I do not lose sight of the fact that two people thrown constantly into each other's society would be tempted to quarrel, but then, as they are pledged to love and honour each other all their lives, a fortnight's extra quarrelling can't matter much.

* * * *

Dolman appeals to history.

It is alleged by historians that Attila, the Hun, met his death through drinking too freely of honey-wine after the celebration of his nuptials. I have always thought that in this touching circumstance there may be a very useful moral for us moderns who in our own manner still keep up the ancient barbaric custom of drinking honey-wine a month after marriage. I have an impression that the unlimited consumption of honey-wine—metaphorically speaking, of course—for a month (more or less) after marriage has often results as regrettable, if not as tragic, as in the celebrated case of the Hun. The average man (this applies equally, of course, to both sexes, but, unfortunately, there is no common gender for the third person singular) has only one opportunity in his life of trying the honeymoon, and the average man has not the courage to confess that his own honeymoon was a delusion and a blunder. But I believe, as a matter of fact, that when a second opportunity does occur it is seldom used.

* * * *

Regards it as an economical mistake.

If I were framing an indictment against the honeymoon, instead of merely stating my doubts as to its wisdom, my principal count would be its vital antagonism to all sound laws of economy, political and domestic. One of the soundest of these laws is—"Live within your means." Now, what young men and women, not abnormally rich, do live within their means during the honeymoon? The wife discovers that prodigality of the honeymoon must be made good out of the household budget for probably the whole of the first year of married life. In any case, it is setting a pace which cannot be maintained, creating a standard of luxury which must speedily be cut down. And that brings me to what would be the second count in the indictment. Disillusion, disenchantment are never pleasant, and sometimes the young wife takes them so much to heart that sweetness gives place to bitterness, and there is a rift in the lute which may make the music mute. Mean, sordid, mercenary considerations! some fair girl, on the verge of her honeymoon, may exclaim; and it must be admitted that they harmonise badly with the halcyon days of the poet's picturing. Yet even my fair friend would doubtless prefer years of bread-and-butter happiness to a week or so's ecstasy. This is assuming, of course, that the short-lived felicity of the honeymoon is mostly a fact, not a fancy.

Gribble resents the question.

Is it quite fair to propound such a conundrum to a bachelor? I think not. As well might an ancient Roman interviewer have called—not, indeed, upon Publius Clodius, but upon some citizen of unassailable respectability—and asked him what impression he had formed of the mysteries of the Bona Dea. Experience is the one thing needful for profitable discussion of the theme, and from such experience the bachelor is *ex hypothesi* excluded. He can only say what he has heard, or has observed, or has deduced from premises which he has had no chance to test, with the fear of the mockery of the initiated ever before his eyes.

* * * *

But proceeds to answer it.

Speaking under these disadvantages, I am disposed to think that any generalisation must be misleading. I have seen honeymoons succeed under circumstances which, by all the known laws of human nature, ought to have secured their failure. A few weeks ago, for instance, I was travelling in Cornwall, and, for a fortnight, encountered an average of two honeymoons a day. Among the rest, I found a honeymoon engaged upon a walking tour. The bride had evidently been beautiful to begin with; but, when I saw her, sunburn had long since destroyed her charms. Her face was blistered, and shone like a harvest moon; great patches of dry skin were peeling off it. There is a patent salve known to mountaineers which palliates these evils; but she had not used it, and her appearance to a stranger was not at all attractive. Yet the blind love of the bridegroom failed to see these things. He was mutely adoring her all the time; he kept clear of the smoking-room, so that he might not miss a moment of her company. That honeymoon was indubitably a success.

* * * *

He speaks of honeymoons that fail.

On the other hand, everyone has heard stories of honeymoons that have not succeeded. Sometimes, it seems, either the bride or the bridegroom finds in the conditions of nomadic life the opportunity of suddenly exhibiting an objectionable trait, the existence of which was not previously suspected. The classical example is set forth in Miss Rhoda Broughton's "Belinda." Belinda, it will be remembered, married a Professor, not because she loved him, but because she respected him. And the respect took wings and fled away, never to return, because he had a frugal mind, and insisted upon frustrating the depredations of a sea-side landlady by keeping bacon in the sitting-room cupboard. The situation, of course, could never have presented itself at Oxford, where his home was, so that, if there were no instances to the contrary, the incident might be held to prove honeymoons a failure. But, as instances to the contrary do occur, it is impossible to draw the inference.

I conclude you are chaffing an old friend when you ask me, of all the miserable men in the world, about "honeymoons." Why, I have been married for nearly three months and I have never had a honeymoon yet. It is true, upon my honour. It was early in the month of April last that I arrived at the Golden Gate of San Francisco from Japan *via* Honolulu, the sweet paradise in the Sandwich Islands. It was there—at Honolulu—that I wanted to spend my honeymoon. I telegraphed all the way from Yokohama to New Orleans for a bride, but I could not get one. She would not come. Now, Honolulu is an ideal place for a honeymoon. It is all lotus flowers, luxury, and love. The men wear real flowers in their hats, and the girls are wreathed round with roses, and the charming Amazons ride their horses like men in fascinating divided skirts. I think, if I had honeymooned at Honolulu, I should never have done honeymooning until the present hour. Alas! it was hopeless. I arrived at Honolulu, and there was no bride to meet or greet me, and I am credibly informed that it is not orthodox to honeymoon without a bride. At Honolulu I met my dear old friend, Bronson Howard, but he only writes plays about honeymoons, and with him was his delightful wife, the sister of Charles Wyndham, but even the Honolulu customs—to say nothing of Bronson Howard—would not let me honeymoon with her. As her clever brother observes in Brighton, "She was engaged." But when I arrived at the Golden Gate, too late for my ideal Honolulu honeymoon, and the good ship "China" was waiting to get into dock and out of quarantine, the captain on the bridge flung me a copy of the *San Francisco Chronicle* that had just come off shore, and when I opened the paper I discovered that I was to be married the very next day. I was never so surprised in my life. There I found my bride's picture, my own picture, full details of our mutual lives from infancy. There I learned how my friends had procured the license, and the ring, and the cake which I was to take, and that everything was settled for the morrow's sacrifice—except the expected bridegroom. Having arrived "on time," as the Americans say, and being a man of an amiable disposition, I could not well refuse to be married when a dear creature had come all the way *via* the West Indies, New Orleans, and Los Angeles to marry me. So on the morrow I was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and I cannot yet believe that I am married, because I never had a ghost of a honeymoon!

Clement Scott has never had one.

* * * *

Why not? you will ask. For the simple reason that I have been so hard at work ever since I was married that I have never had time for a honeymoon. They stuck me down to a desk at San Francisco, and made me write my impressions on Japan, the country I had seen, and

But is still waiting.

America, the country of which I was then supremely ignorant. They took me on to Chicago to write about the World's Fair, about my impressions on America, of which I knew nothing, of my views on the Sunday opening question, American theatres, the fresh air fund—heaven only knows what! They rushed me on to New York, where once more I wrote my impressions on America—still vapid ones—about the American theatres, about *omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*. They rushed me back across the Atlantic, and before I had recovered my breath they stuck me down in my old seat in the theatre and bade me start afresh. They asked me to "take up the running" where I left off. They beguiled me to the Royal Wedding, and made me write reports and essays and poems about gala performances, and street processions, and other brides and bridegrooms, and other honeymoons; but, confound it, I have never as yet had a honeymoon of my own, "all to myself," as the children say. My dear wife, when I have a lucid interval, whispers of Broadstairs, or Sevenoaks, or Clovelly, or the Scilly Islands. She says I am a dear and deserve a honeymoon. I know I am, but I don't get one. I usually get a holiday in August, but they won't let me have one this year, because I have been round the world. They think I have had holidays enough. I don't. I want more. I fear I shall have to spend my honeymoon at the Crystal Palace or the Zoo! No! on second thoughts I will spend it in Lincoln's Inn Fields, before they are handed over to the little children of Clare Market. I begin to think when I do get my honeymoon that I shall be too old to enjoy it. But the lady most interested in the matter insists upon having a honeymoon before Christmas. I wish she may get it.

* * * *

Jerome asks a woman.

I remember once asking a woman this very question—or, rather, the sense of it. I think the form in which I put it was, "Would you continue the honeymoon as a custom, or abolish it?" It was a long while before she replied, so long that I thought she had forgotten, or did not care to answer. When she did speak, it was in a tone somewhat more serious than the subject seemed to me to demand. "I would continue it," she said. "And why?" I asked. "Because," she replied, "I think, for good or bad, the sooner it's over the better." Her reason must have appeared to herself to require explanation, for, after a short pause, during which she crossed to the window, where she stood looking down into the lighted street, she continued of her own accord, "Was not there some custom among one of the ancient, forgotten peoples—I forget which," she said, laughing—"ordaining that when a man and woman, loving each other, or thinking that they loved each other, had been joined together, they went down on the night of their wedding day hand in hand to the Temple? And into the dark

recesses of the Temple, through many winding passages, the priest led them until they came to a high chamber, where, from a Sphinx-like head, spoke the Oracle. There the priest left them, clanging-to the massive door behind him, and there, alone in silence, they made sacrifices to their gods; and in the night the Oracle spoke to them, showing them their future life —whether they had chosen well? whether their love would live or die? And in the morning the priest returned and led them back into the day; and they dwelt among their fellows. But no one was permitted to question them; nor they to answer, should any do so. Well, do you know, our nineteenth century honeymoon, at Brighton, Switzerland, or Ramsgate, as the choice or necessity may be, always seems to me to be merely another form of that night spent alone in the chamber before the Sphinx-like head. Our young men and women marry, and we kiss them and congratulate them, and, standing on the doorstep, throw rice and old slippers at them, and shout good wishes after them; and he waves his gloved hand to us, and she flutters her little handkerchief from the carriage window; and we watch their smiling faces and hear their laughter until the corner hides them from view. Then we go about our own business, and a short time passes by; and one day we meet them again, and their faces have grown older and graver, and I always wonder what the Oracle has told them during that little while that they have been away. But, of course, it would not do to ask them. Nor would they answer truly if I did." My friend laughed, and, leaving the window, took her place beside her tea things, and, other callers dropping in, we fell to talk of pictures, plays, and people.

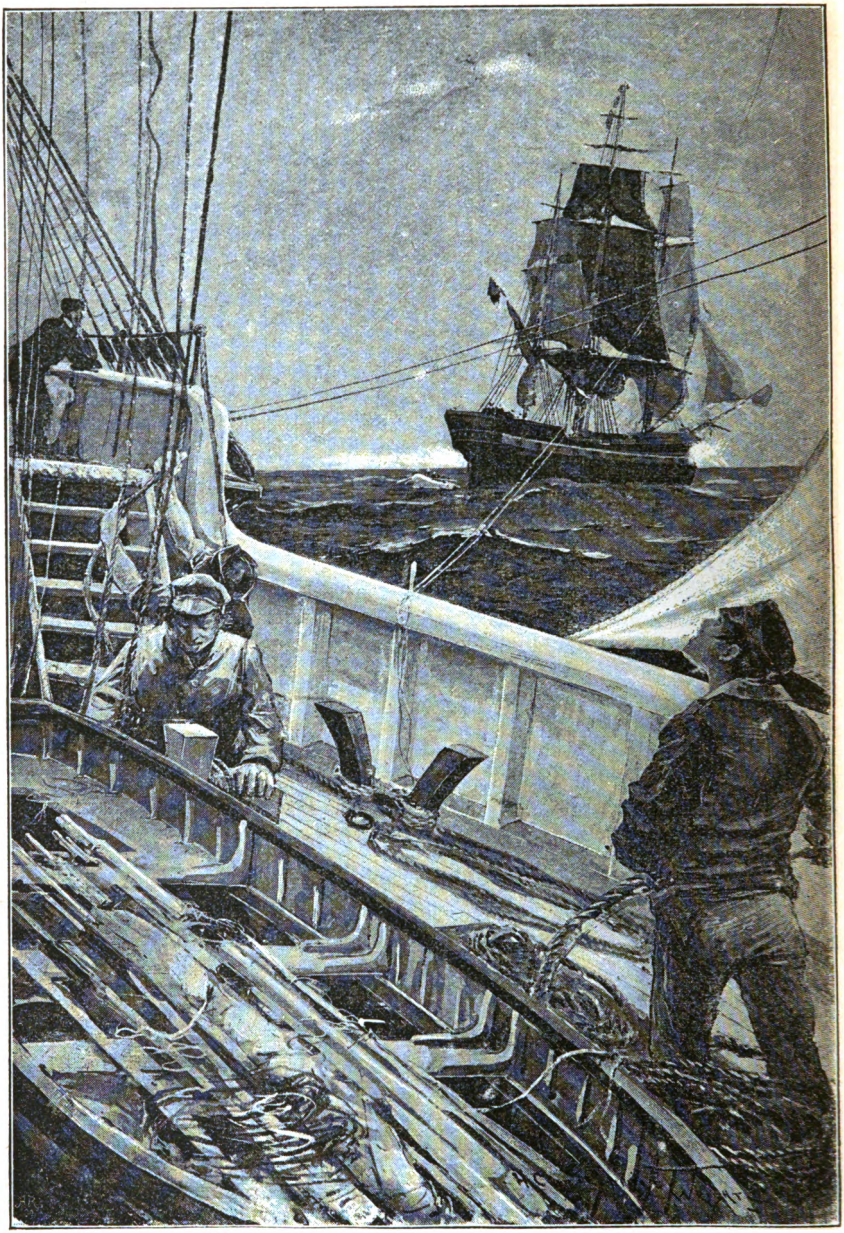
* * * *

Likewise consults a man.

Another time I discussed the subject with a man of whose sense and judgment I have a high opinion. "My dear boy," he replied; "take my advice, if ever you get married, arrange it so that the honeymoon shall only last a week, and let it be a bustling week into the bargain. Take a Cook's circular tour. Get married on the Saturday morning, cut the breakfast and all that foolishness, and catch the eleven from Charing Cross to Paris. Take her up the Eiffel Tower on Sunday. Lunch at Fontainebleau. Dine at the Maison Dorée, and show her the Moulin Rouge in the evening. Take the night train for Lucern. Devote Monday and Tuesday to doing Switzerland, and get into Rome by Thursday morning, taking the Italian lakes *en route*. On Friday cross to Marseilles, and from there push along to Monte Carlo. Let her have a flutter at the tables. Start early Saturday morning for Spain, cross the Pyrenées on mules, and rest at Bordeaux on Sunday. Get back to Paris on Monday (Monday is always a good day for the opera), and on Tuesday evening you will be at home, and glad to get there. Don't give her time to criticise you until she has got used to you. No man will bear

unprotected exposure to a young girl's eyes. The honeymoon is the matrimonial miscroscope. Wobble it. Confuse it with many objects. Cloud it with other interests. Don't sit still to be examined. Besides, remember that a man always appears at his best when active, and a woman at her worst. Bustle her, my dear boy, bustle her: I don't care who she may be. Give her plenty of luggage to look after; make her catch trains. Let her see the average husband sprawling comfortably over the railway cushions while his wife has to sit bolt upright in the corner left to her. Let her hear how other men swear. Let her smell other men's tobacco. Hurry up, and get her accustomed quickly to the sight of mankind. Then she will be less surprised and shocked as she grows to know you. One of the best fellows I ever knew spoilt his married life beyond repair by a long, quiet honeymoon. They went off for a month to a lonely cottage in some heaven-forsaken spot where never a soul came near them, and never a thing happened but morning, afternoon and night. There for thirty days she overhauled him. When he yawned—and he yawned pretty often, I guess, during that month—she thought of the size of his mouth, and when he put his heels upon the fender she sat and brooded upon the size and shape of his feet. At mealtime, not feeling hungry herself, having nothing to do to make her hungry, she would occupy herself with watching him eat, and at night, not feeling sleepy for the same reason, she would lie awake and listen to his snoring. After the first day or two, he grew tired of talking nonsense, and she of listening to it (it sounded nonsense now they could speak it aloud. They had fancied it poetry when they had had to whisper it); and, having no other subject, as yet, of common interest, they would sit and stare in front of them in silence. One day some trifle irritated him, and he swore. On a busy railway platform, or in a crowded hotel, she would have said 'Oh,' and they would both have laughed. From that echoing desert the silly words rose up in widening circles towards the sky, and that night she cried herself to sleep. Bustle them, my dear boy, bustle them. We all like each other better the less we think about one another, and the honeymoon is an exceptionally critical time."

The photographs of Mr. Willard, in "Judah" and "The Middleman," which appeared on pp. 74 and 75 of *The Idler* for August—"LIONS IN THEIR DENS": HENRY ARTHUR JONES, were from photographs taken by Messrs. ELLIOTT & FRY, 55, Baker Street, Portman Square, London, W.

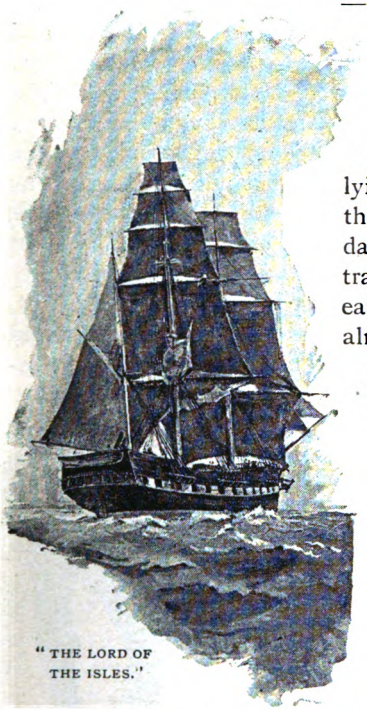


"WE SIGHTED AND SIGNALLED A LARGE ENGLISH MERCHANTMAN."

The Phantom Death.

By W. Clark Russell.

Illustrations by Seppings Wright.



"THE LORD OF THE ISLES."

ON the 24th of April, 1840, having finished the business that had carried me into the Brazils, I arrived at Rio de Janeiro, where I found a vessel lying nearly loaded, and sailing for the port of Bristol in four or five days. In those times, passenger traffic between Great Britain and the eastern coast of South America was almost entirely carried on in small ships, averaging from 200 to 500 tons. The funnel of the ocean mail steamer, with her gilded saloons and side wheels, which, to the great admiration of all beholders, slapped twelve knots an hour out of the composite fabric, had not yet hove into sight above the horizon of commerce, and folks were very well satisfied if they were no longer than three months in reaching the Brazilian coast out of the River Thames.

The little ship in which I took passage was a barque called the Lord of the Isles; her burthen was something under four hundred tons. She was a round-bowed waggon of a vanished type, with a square, sawed-off stern, painted ports, heavy over-hanging channels, and as loftily rigged, I was going to say, as a line-of-battle-ship, owing to her immense beam, which gave her the stability of a church. I applied to the agent and hired a cabin, and found myself, to my secret satisfaction, the only passenger in the ship. Yes, I was rejoiced to be the sole passenger; my passage out had been rendered memorably miserable by the society of as ill-conditioned, bad-tempered, sulky a lot of wretches as ever turned in of a night into bunks, and cursed the captain in their gizzards in a calm for not being able to whistle a wind up over the sea-line.

The name of the skipper of the Lord of the Isles was Joyce. He was unlike the average run of the men in that trade. Instead of being beef-faced and bow-legged, humid of eye and gay with grog-blossoms, he was tall, pale, spare; he spoke low and in a melancholy key; he never swore; he drank wine and water, and there was little or nothing in his language to suggest the sailor. His berth was right aft on the starboard side; mine was right aft also, next his. Three cabins on either hand ran forward from these two after-berths. Two of them were occupied by the first and second mates. Between was a roomy "state-cabin," as the term then was: a plain interior furnished with an oblong table and fixed chairs, lighted by day by a large skylight, by night by a couple of brass lamps.

We sailed away on a Monday morning, as well I recollect, out of the spacious and splendid scene of the harbour of Rio, and under full breasts of canvas, swelling to the height of a main-

"SANG OUT CHEERILY."

skysail big enough to serve as a mizzen top-gallantsail for a thousand-ton ship of to-day, and with taut bowlines and yearning jibs, and a heel of hull that washed a two-foot wide streak of greenish copper through the wool-white swirl of froth that broke from the bows, the Lord of the Isles headed on a straight course for the deep solitudes of the Atlantic.

All went well with us for several days. Our ship's company consisted of twelve men, including a boatswain and carpenter. The forecastle hands appeared very hearty, likely fellows, despite their pier-head raiment of Scotch cap and broken small clothes, and open flannel shirt, and greasy sheath-knife belted to the hip. They worked with a will, they sang out cheerily at the ropes, they

went in and out of the galley at mealtime without faces of loathing, and but one complaint came aft before our wonderful, mysterious troubles began: the ship's bread crawled, they said, and being found truly very bad, good white flour was served out in lieu.

We had been eight days at sea, and in that time had made fairly good way; it drew down a quiet, soft, black night with the young moon gone soon after sunset, a trembling flash of stars over the mastheads, a murky dimness of heat and of stagnation all round about the sea-line, and a frequent glance of sea-fire over the side when a dip of the barque's round bends drove the water from her in a swelling cloud of ebony. I walked the quarter-deck with the captain, and our talk was of England and of the Brazils, and of his experiences as a mariner of thirty years' standing.

"What of the weather?" said I, as we came to a pause at the binnacle whose bright disc of illuminated card touched into phantom outlines the hairy features of the Jack who grasped the wheel.

"There's a spell of quiet before us, I fear," he answered, in his melancholy, monotonous voice. "No doubt a day will come, Mr. West, when the unhappy sea-captain upon whose forehead the shipowner would be glad to brand the words 'Prompt Despatch' will be rendered by steam independent of that most capricious of all things—wind. The wind bloweth as it listeth—which is very well whilst it keeps all on blowing; for with our machinery of trusses, and parrels, and braces, we can snatch a sort of propulsion out of anything short of hurricane antagonism within six points of what we want to look up for. But of a dead night and of a dead day, with the wind up and down, and your ship showing her stern to the thirty-two points in a single watch, what's to be done with an owner's request of *look sharp?* Will you come below and have some grog?"

The second mate, a man named Bonner, was in charge of the deck. I followed the captain into the cabin, where he smoked a cigar; he drank a little wine and water, I drained a tumbler of cold brandy grog, then stepped above for an hour of fresh air, and afterwards to bed, six bells, eleven o'clock, striking as I turned in.

I slept soundly, awoke at seven o'clock, and shortly afterwards went on deck. The watch were at work washing down. The crystal brine flashed over the white plank to the swing of the bucket in the boatswain's powerful grasp, and the air was filled with the busy noise of scrubbing-brushes, and of the murmurs of some live-stock under the longboat. The morning was a wide

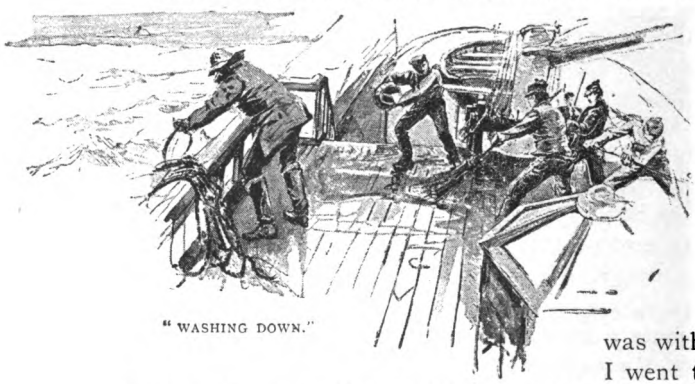
radiant scene of tropic sky and sea—afar, right astern on the light blue verge, trembled the mother-o'-pearl canvas of a ship; a small breeze was blowing off the beam; from under the round bows of the slightly-leaning barque came a pleasant, brook-like sound of running waters—a soft shaling as of foam over stones, sweet to the ear in that heat as the music of a fountain. Mr. Bonner, the second mate, was again in charge of the deck. When I passed through the companion hatch I saw him standing abreast of the skylight at the rail: the expression of his face was grave and full of concern, and he seemed to watch the movements of the men with an inattentive eye.

I bade him good morning; he made no reply for a little, but looked at me fixedly, and then said, "I'm afraid Captain Joyce is a dead man."

"What is wrong with him?" I exclaimed eagerly, and much startled.

"I don't know, sir. I wish there was a medical man on board. Perhaps you'd be able to tell what he's suffering from if you saw him."

I at once went below and found the lad who waited upon us in the cabin preparing the table for breakfast. I asked him if the captain was alone. He answered that Mr. Stroud, the chief mate, was with him. On this I went to the door of Captain Joyce's cabin and lightly knocked. The mate looked out, and, seeing who I was, told me in a soft voice to enter.



"WASHING DOWN."

Captain Joyce lay in his bunk dressed in a flannel shirt and a pair of white drill trousers. All his throat and a considerable portion of his chest were exposed, and his feet were naked. I looked at him scarcely crediting my sight: I did not know him as the man I had parted with but a few hours before. He was swelled from head to foot as though drowned: the swelling contorted his countenance out of all resemblance to his familiar face; the

flesh of him that was visible was a pale blue, as if rubbed with a powder of the stuff called "blue" which the laundresses use in getting up their linen. His eyes were open, but the pupils were rolled out of sight, and the "whites," as they are called, were covered with red blotches.

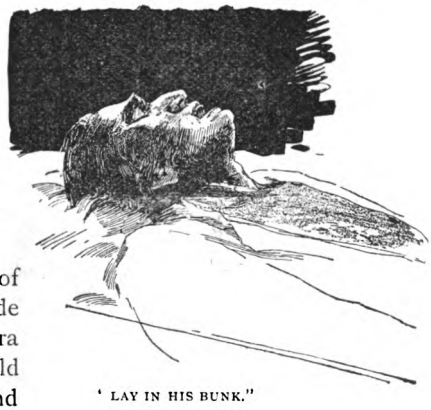
I had no knowledge of medicine, and could not imagine what had come to the poor man. He was unconscious, and evidently fast sinking. I said to Mr Stroud, "What is this?"

The mate answered, "I'm afraid he's poisoned himself accidentally. It looks to me like poison. Don't it seem so to you, sir? See how his fingers and toes are curled."

I ran my eye over the cabin and exclaimed, "Have you searched for any bottles containing poison?"

"I did so when he sent for me at four o'clock, and complained of feeling sick and ill. He was then changing colour, and his face was losing its proper looks. I asked him if he thought he had taken anything by mistake? He answered no, unless he had done so in his sleep. He awoke feeling very bad, and that was all he could tell me."

I touched the poor fellow's hand, and found it cold. His breathing was swift and thin. At moments a convulsion, like a wrenching shudder, passed through him.



'LAY IN HIS BUNK."

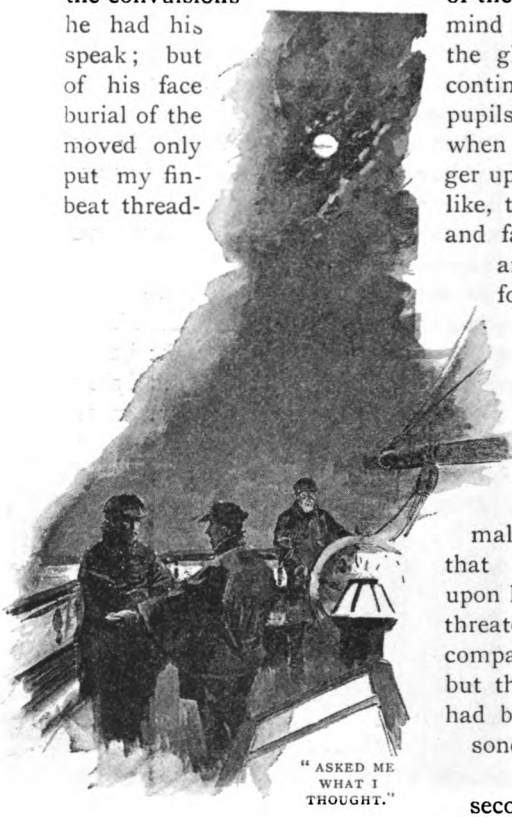
"Is it," I asked, "some form of country sickness, do you think—some kind of illness that was lying latent in him when we sailed?"

"I never heard of any sort of sickness," he answered, "that made a man look like that—not cholera even. And what but poison would do its work so quickly. Depend upon it he's either been poisoned, or poisoned himself unawares."

"Poisoned!" I exclaimed. "Who's the man in this ship that's going to do such a thing?"

"It's no natural illness," he answered, looking at the livid, bloated face of the dying man, and he repeated with gloomy emphasis, "He's either been poisoned, or he's poisoned himself unawares."

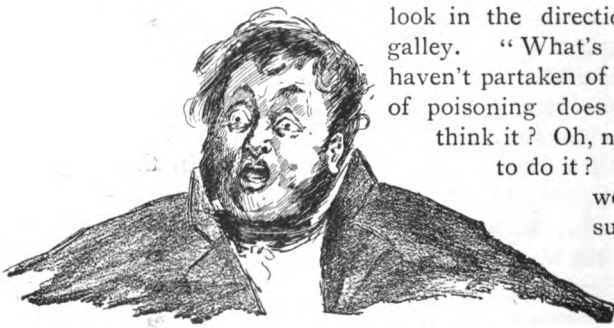
I stood beside Mr. Stroud for about a quarter-of-an-hour, watching the captain and speculating upon the cause of his mortal sickness; we talked in low voices, often pausing and starting, for the convulsions of the sufferer made us think that he had his mind and wished to sit up and speak; but the ghastly, horrid, vacant look of his face continued fixed by the stubborn burial of the pupils of his eyes; his lips moved only when his frame was convulsed. I put my finger upon his pulse and found the beat thread-like, terribly rapid, intermittent, and faint. Then, feeling sick and scared, I went on deck for some air.



"ASKED ME WHAT I THOUGHT."

The second mate asked me how the captain was and what I thought. I answered that he might be dead even now as I spoke, that I could not conceive the nature of the malady that was killing him, that had apparently fastened upon him in his sleep, and was threatening to kill him within the compass of four or five hours, but that Mr. Stroud believed he had been poisoned, or had poisoned himself accidentally.

"Poisoned!" echoed the second mate, and he sent a look in the direction of the ship's galley. "What's he eaten that we haven't partaken of? A regular case of poisoning does the chief officer think it? Oh, no—oh, no—who's to do it? The captain's too well liked to allow of such a guess as that. If the food's been fouled by the cook in



"'THE CAPTAIN'S GONE'!"

error, how's it that the others of us who ate at the cabin table aren't likewise seized?"

There was no more to be said about it then, but in less than half an hour's time the mate came up and told us the captain was gone.

"He never recovered his senses, never spoke though to talk in delirium," he said.

"You think he was poisoned, sir?" said the second mate.

"Not wilfully," answered Mr. Stroud, looking at me. "I never said that, nor is it a thing one wants to think of," he added, sending his gaze round the wide scene of flashing ocean.

He then abruptly quitted us and walked to the galley, where for some while he remained out of sight. When he returned he told the second mate with whom I had stood talking that he had spoken to the cook, and thoroughly overhauled the dressing utensils, and was satisfied that the galley had nothing to do with the murderous mischief which had befallen the skipper.

"'I AM COCK-CERTAIN.'"

"But why be so cock-certain, Mr. Stroud," said I, "that the captain's dead of poisoning?"

"I *am* cock-certain," he answered shortly, and with some little passion. "Name me the illness that's going to kill a man in three or four hours, and make such a corpse of him as lies in the captain's cabin?"

He called to the second mate, and they paced the deck together deep in talk. The men had come up from breakfast, and the boatswain had set them to the various jobs of the morning; but the news of the captain's death had gone forward; it was shocking by reason of its suddenness. Then again, the death of the master of a ship lies cold and heavy upon the spirits of a company at sea; 'tis the head gone, the thinking part. The mate may make as good a captain, but he's not the man the crew signed articles under. The seamen of the Lord of the Isles wore grave faces as they went about their work; they spoke softly, and the boatswain delivered his orders in subdued notes.

After a bit the second mate walked forward and addressed the boatswain and some of the men, but what he said I did not catch.

I breakfasted and returned on deck: it was then ten o'clock. I found the main-topsail to the mast and a number of seamen standing in the gangway, whilst the two mates hung together on the quarter-deck, talking, as though waiting. In a few minutes four seamen brought the body of the captain up through the companion hatch, and carried it to the gangway. The corpse was stitched up in a hammock and rested upon a plank over which the English ensign was thrown. I thought this funeral very hurried, and dreaded to think that the poor man might be breathing and alive at the instant of his launch, for after all we had but the mate's assurance that the captain was dead; and what did Mr. Stroud know of death—that is, as it would be indicated by the body of a man who had died from some swift, subtle, nameless distemper, as Captain Joyce seemingly had?

"VERY HURRIED."

When the funeral was over, the topsail swung, and the men returned to their work, I put the matter to the mate, who answered that the corpse had turned black, and that there could be no more question of his being dead than of his now being overboard.

The breeze freshened that morning. At noon it was blowing strong, with a dark, hard sky of compacted cloud, under which curls and shreds of yellow sand fled like a scattering of smoke, and the mates were unable to get an observation. Mr. Stroud seemed engrossed by the sudden responsibilities which had come upon him, and talked little. That afternoon he shifted into the captain's berth, being now, indeed, in command of the barque. It was convenient to him to live in that cabin, for the necessary nautical appliances for navigating the ship were there along with facilities for their use. Mr. Bonner told me that he and the mate had thoroughly examined the cabin, overhauled the

captain's boxes, lockers, shelves and the like for anything of a poisonous nature, but had met with nothing whatever. It was indeed an amazing mystery, he said, and he was no longer of opinion with Mr. Stroud that poison, accidentally or otherwise taken, had destroyed the captain. Indeed, he now leaned to my view, that Captain Joyce had fallen a victim to some disease which had lain latent in him since leaving Rio, something deadly quick and horribly transforming, well known, maybe, to physicians of the Brazils, if, indeed, it were peculiar to that country.

Well, three days passed, and nothing of any moment happened. The wind drew ahead and braced our yards fore and aft for us, and the tub of a barque went to leeward like an empty cask, shouldering the head seas into snowstorms off her heavy round bow, and furrowing a short scope of oil-smooth wake almost at right angles with her sternpost. Though Mr. Stroud had charge of the ship, he continued from this time to keep watch and watch with Mr. Bonner as in the captain's life, not choosing, I daresay, to entrust the charge of the deck to the boatswain. On the evening of this third day that I have come to, I was sitting in the cabin under the lamp writing down some memories of the past week in a diary, when the door of the captain's berth was opened, and my name was faintly called. I saw Mr. Stroud, and instantly went to him. His hands were clasped upon his brow, and he swayed violently as though in pain, with greater vehemence than the heave of the deck warranted: his eyes were starting, and, by the clear light of the brace of cabin lamps, I easily saw that his complexion was unusually dusky, and darkening even, so it seemed to me, as I looked.

"OH, MY GOD!" HE EXCLAIMED."

I cried out, "What is the matter, Mr. Stroud?"

"Oh, my God!" he exclaimed, "I am in terrible pain—I am horribly ill—I am dying."

I grasped him by the arm and conducted him to his bunk, into which he got, groaning and holding his head, with an occasional strange short plunge of his feet such as a swimmer makes when resting in the water on his back. I asked him if he was only just now seized. He answered that he was in a deep sleep, from which he was awakened by a burning sensation throughout his body. He lay quiet awhile supposing it was a sudden heat of the blood, but the fire increased, and with it came torturing pains in the head, and attacks of convulsions; and even whilst he told me this the convulsive fits grew upon him, and he broke off to groan deeply as though in exquisite pain and distress of mind; then he'd set his teeth and then presently scream out, "Oh, my God! I have been poisoned—I am dying!"

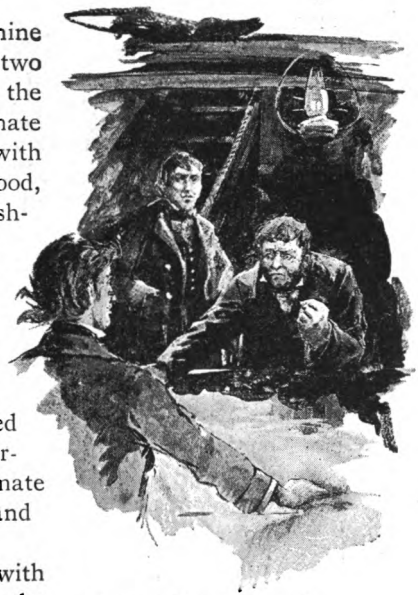
"BAWLING OUT ORDERS TO THE MEN."

I was thunderstruck and terrified to the last degree. What was this dreadful thing—this phantom death that had come into the ship? Was it a contagious plague? But what distemper is there that, catching men in their sleep, swells and discolours them even as the gaze rests upon them, and dismisses their souls to God in the space of three or four hours?

I ran on deck, but waited until Mr. Bonner had finished bawling out some orders to the men before addressing him. The moon was young, but bright, and she sheared scythe-like through the pouring shadows, and the light of her made a marvellous brilliant whiteness of the foam as it burst in masses from the plunge of the barque's bows. When I gave the news to Mr. Bonner he stared at me for some moments wildly and in silence, and then rushed below. I followed him as quick as he went, for I had often used the sea, and

the giddiest dance of a deck-plank was all one with the solid earth to my accustomed feet. We entered the mate's berth, and Mr. Bonner lighted the bracket lamp and stood looking at his shipmate, and by the aid of the flame he had kindled, and the bright light flowing in through the open door, I beheld a tragic and wonderful change in Mr. Stroud, though scarce ten minutes had passed since I was with him. His face was bloated, the features distorted, his eyes rolled continuously, and frequent heavy twitching shudders convulsed his body. But the most frightful part was the dusky hue of his skin, that was of a darker blue than I had observed in the captain.

He still had his senses, and repeated to the second mate what he had related to me. But he presently grew incoherent, then fell delirious, in about an hour's time was speechless and lay racked with convulsions; of a horrid blue, the features shockingly convulsed, and the whites of the eyes alone showing as in the captain's case.



"'POISON!' HE SHOUTED."

He had called me at about nine o'clock, and he was a dead man at two in the morning, or four bells in the middle watch. Both the second mate and I were constantly in and out with the poor fellow; but we could do no good, only marvel, and murmur our astonishment and speculations. We put the captain's steward, a young fellow, to watch him—this was an hour before his death—and at four bells the lad came out, with a white face, and said to me, who sat at the table, depressed and awed and overwhelmed by this second ghastly and indeterminable visitation, that the chief mate was dead, had ceased to breathe, and was quickly turning black.

Mr. Bonner came into the cabin with the boatswain, and they went into the dead man's berth and stayed there about a quarter-of-an-hour. When they came out the boatswain looked at me hard. I recollect that that man's name was Matthews. I asked some questions, but they had nothing to tell, except that the body had turned black.

"What manner of disease can it be that kills in this fashion?" said I. "If it's the plague, we may be all dead men in a week."

"It's no plague," said the boatswain in a voice that trembled with its own volume of sound.

"What is it?" I cried.

"Poison!" he shouted, and he dropped his clenched fist with the weight of a cannon-ball upon the table.

I looked at the second mate, who exclaimed, "The boatswain swears to the signs. He's seen the like of that corpse in three English seamen who were poisoned up at Chusan."

"Do you want to make out that both men have committed suicide?" I exclaimed.

"I want to make out that both men have been poisoned!" shouted the boatswain, in his voice of thunder.

There was a significance in the insolence of the fellow that confounded and alarmed me, and the meaning was deepened by the second mate allowing his companion to address me in this roaring, affronting way without reproof. I hoped that the man had been drinking, and that the second mate was too stupid with horror to heed his behaviour to me, and without giving either of them another word I walked to my cabin and lay down.

"'IT'S THE WISH OF THE MEN.'"

I have no space here to describe the wild and terrifying fancies which ran in my head. For some while I heard the boatswain and the second mate conversing, but the cabin bulkhead was stout, the straining and washing noises all about the helm heavy and continuous, and I caught not a syllable of what they said. At what hour I fell asleep I cannot tell; when I awoke my cabin was full of the sunshine that streamed in through the stern window. I dressed, and took hold of the handle of the door, and found myself a prisoner. Not doubting I was locked up in error, I shook the door, and beat upon it, and called out loudly to be released. After a few minutes the door was opened, and the second mate stood in the threshold. He exclaimed:

"Mr. West, it's the wish of the men that you should be locked

up. I'm no party to the job—but they're resolved. I'll tell you plainly what they think: they believe you've had a hand in the death of the captain and the chief mate—the bo'sun's put that into their heads; I'm the only navigator left, and they're afraid you'll try your hand on me if you have your liberty. You'll be regularly fed and properly seen to; but it's the crew's will that you stop here."

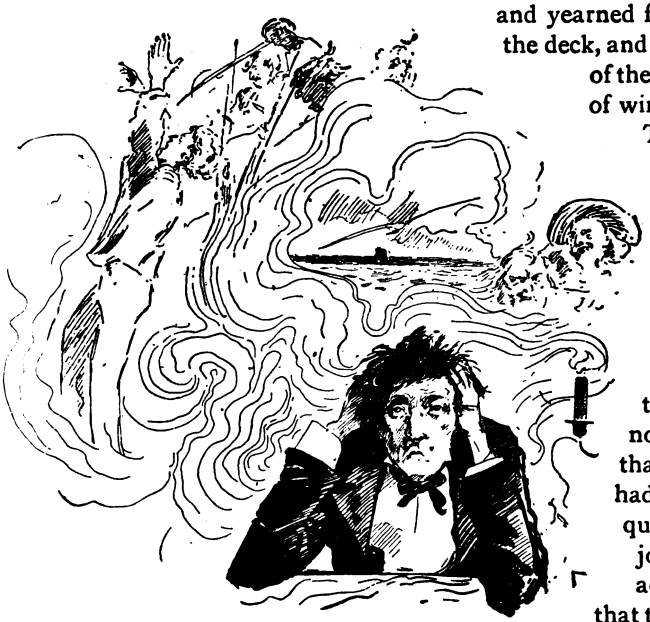
With that, and without giving me time to utter a word, he closed and secured the door. I leaned against the bulkhead and sought to rally my wits, but I own that for a long while I was as one whose mind comes slowly to him after he has been knocked down insensible. I never for an instant supposed that the crew really believed me guilty of poisoning the captain and chief mate: I concluded that the men had mutinied, and arranged with Mr. Bonner to run away with the ship, and that I should remain locked up in my cabin until they had decided what to do with me.

By-and-bye the door was opened, and the young steward put a tray containing some breakfast upon the cabin deck. He was but a mule of a boy, and I guessed that nothing but what might still further imperil me could come of my questioning him, so in silence I watched him put down the tray and depart. The meal thus sent to me was plentiful, and I drew some small heart out of the attention. Whilst I ate and drank, I heard sounds in the adjoining berth, and presently gathered that they were preparing the body of the chief mate for its last toss over the side. After a bit they went on deck with the corpse, and then all was still in the cabin. I knew by the light of the sun that the vessel was still heading on her course for England. It was a bright morning, with a wild windy sparkle in as much of the weather as I could see through the cabin window. The plunge of the ship's stern brought the water in a roar of milky froth all about the counter close under me, and the frequent jar of rudder and jump of wheel assured me that the barque was travelling fast through the seas.

"THE YOUNG STEWARD."

What, in God's name, did the men mean by keeping me a prisoner? Did they think me a madman? Or that I, whose life together with theirs depended upon the safe navigation of the barque,

would destroy those who alone could promise me security? And what had slain the two men? If poison, who had administered it? One man might have died by his own hand, but not both. And since both had perished from the same cause, self-murder was not to be thought of. What was it, then, that had killed them, visiting them in their sleep, and discolouring, bloating, convulsing, and destroying them in a few hours? Was it some deadly malady subtly lurking in the atmosphere of the after part of the vessel? If so, then I might be the next to be taken. Or was there some devilish murderer lying secretly hidden? Or was one of the crew the doer of these things? I seemed to smell disease and death, and yearned for the freedom of the deck, and for the sweetness of the wide, strong rush of wind.



"WOULD THEY SEND ME ADRIFT?"

The day passed. The second mate never visited me. The lad arrived with my meals, and when he came with my supper I asked him some questions, but obtained no more news than that the second mate had taken up his quarters in the adjoining berth as acting captain, and that the boatswain was keeping watch and watch with him.

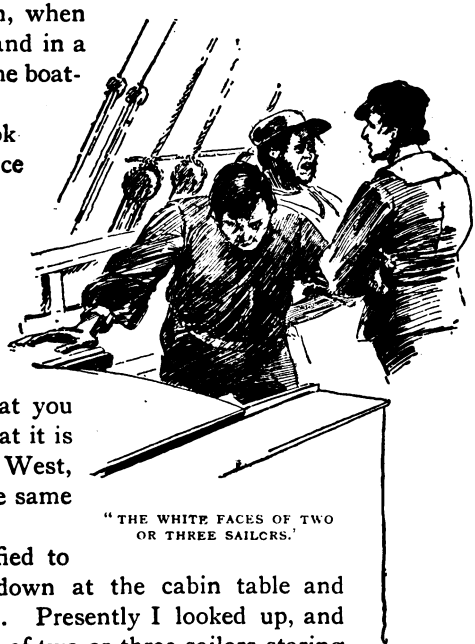
I got but little rest that night. It blew hard, and the pitching of the vessel was unusually heavy. Then, again, I was profoundly agitated and in deep distress of mind; for, supposing the men in earnest, it was not only horrible to be thought capable of murder, there was the prospect of my being charged and of having to clear my character. Or, supposing the men's suspicion or accusation a villainous pretext, how would they serve me? Would they send me adrift, or set me ashore to perish on

some barren coast, or destroy me out of hand? You will remember that I am writing of an age when seafaring was not as it now is. The pirate and the slaver were still afloat doing a brisk business. There often went a desperate spirit in ships' forecastles, and the maritime records of the time abound with tragic narratives of revolt, seizure, cruelty of a ferocious sort.

Another day and another night went by, and I was still locked up in my cabin, and, saving the punctual arrival of the lad with my meals, no man visited me.

Some time about eight o'clock on the morning of the third day of my confinement, I was looking through the cabin window at the space of grey and foaming sea and sallow flying sky which came and went in the square of the aperture with the lift and fall of the barque's stern, when my cabin door was struck upon, and in a minute afterwards opened, and the boatswain appeared.

"Mr. West," said he, after looking at me for a moment in silence with a face whose expression was made up of concern and fear and embarrassment, "I've come on my own part, and on the part of the men, sir, to ask your pardon for our treatment of you. We was mistook. And our fears made us too willing to believe that you had a hand in it. We dunno what it is now, but as Jesus is my God, Mr. West, the second mate he lies dead of the same thing in the next cabin!"



"THE WHITE FACES OF TWO OR THREE SAILORS.'

I went past him too stupefied to speak, and in a blind way sat down at the cabin table and leaned my head against my hand. Presently I looked up, and in lifting my eyes I caught sight of two or three sailors staring down with white faces through the skylight.

"You tell me that the second mate's dead?" said I.

"Yes, sir, dead of poison, too, so help me God!" cried the boatswain.

"Who remains to navigate the ship?" I said.

"That's it, sir," he exclaimed, "unless you can do it?"

"Not I. There's no man amongst you more ignorant. May I look at the body?"

He opened the door of the cabin in which the others had died, and there, in the bunk from which the bodies of Captain Joyce and Mr. Stroud had been removed, lay now the blackened corpse of the second mate. It was an awful sight and a passage of time horrible with the mystery which charged it. I felt no rage at the manner in which I had been used by that dead man there and the hurricane-lunged seaman alongside of me and the fellows forward; I could think of nothing but the mystery of the three men's deaths, the lamentable plight we were all in through our wanting a navigator, with the chance, moreover, that it *was* the plague, and not poison mysteriously given, that had killed the captain and mates, so that all the rest of us, as I have said, might be dead men in another week.

"I'VE DISCOVERED IT!"

I returned to the cabin, and the boatswain joined me, and we stood beside the table conversing, anxiously watched by several men who had stationed themselves at the skylight.

"What we've got to do," said I, "is to keep a bright lookout for ships, and borrow someone to steer us home from the first vessel that will lend us a navigator. We're bound to fall in with something soon. Meanwhile, you're a smart seaman yourself, Matthews, as well qualified as any one of them who have died to sail the ship, and there s surely some intelligent sailor amongst the crew who would relieve you in taking charge of the deck. I'll do all I can."

"The question is, where's the vessel now?" said the boatswain.

"Fetch me the log book," said I, "and see if you can find the chart they've been using to prick the courses off on. We should be able to find out where the ship was at noon yesterday. I can't enter that cabin. The sight of the poor fellow makes me sick."

He went to the berth and passed through the door, and might have left me for about five minutes, evidently hunting for the chart,

when he suddenly rushed out, roaring in his thunderous voice, "I've discovered it! I've discovered it!" and fled like a madman up the companion steps. I was startled almost to the very stopping of my heart by this sudden furious wild behaviour in him: then wondering what he meant by shouting "he had discovered it!" I walked to the cabin door, and the very first thing my eye lighted upon was a small snake, leisurely coiling its way from the head to the feet of the corpse. Its middle was about the thickness ot a rifle barrel, and it then tapered to something like whipcord to its tail. It was about two feet long, snow white, and speckled with black and red spots.

This, then, was the phantom death! Yonder venomous reptile it was, then, that, creeping out of some secret hiding-place, and visiting the unhappy men one after another, had stung them in their sleep, in the darkness of the cabin, and vanished before they had struck a light and realised indeed that something desperate had come to them!

Whilst I stood looking at the snake, whose horror seemed to gain fresh accentuation from the very beauty of its snow-white speckled skin and diamond-bright eyes, the boatswain, armed with a long handspike, and followed by a number of the crew, came headlong to the cabin. He thrust the end of the handspike under the belly of the creature, and hove it into the middle of the berth.

"Stand clear!" he roared, and with a blow or two smashed the reptile's head into a pulp. "Open that cabin window," said he. One of the men did so, and the boatswain with his boot scraped the mess of mashed snake on to the handspike and shook it overboard.

"I told you they was poisoned," he cried, breathing deep, "and, oh my God, Mr. West—and I humbly ask your pardon again for having suspected ye—do you know, sir, whilst I was a talking to you just now I was actually thinking of taking up my quarters in this here cabin this very night."

Thus much: and now to end this singular experience in a sentence or two. Three days after the discovery of the snake we sighted and signalled a large English merchantman bound to London from the Rio de la Plata. Her chief officer came aboard, and we related our story. He asked to see the snake. We told him we had thrown it overboard. On my describing it he informed me that he guessed it was the little poisonous reptile

known in certain districts of South America as the Ibiboboko. He returned to his ship, and shortly afterwards the commander sent us his third officer with instructions to keep in company as long as possible.

My First Book.

"A ROMANCE OF TWO WORLDS."

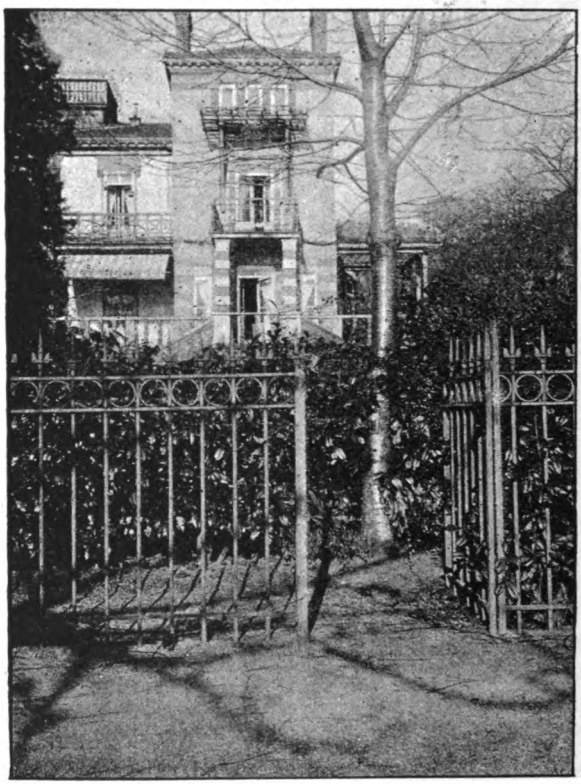
By Marie Corelli.

(Illustrated from photographs taken by "Adrian.")

IT is an unromantic thing for an author to have had no literary vicissitudes. One cannot expect to be considered interesting, unless one has come up to London with the proverbial solitary "shilling," and gone about hungry and footsore, begging from one hard-hearted publisher's house to another with one's perpetually-rejected manuscript under one's arm. One ought to have consumed the "midnight oil"; to have "coined one's heart's blood" (to borrow the tragic expression of a contemporary gentleman-novelist); to have sacrificed one's self-respect by metaphorically crawling on all-fours to the critical faculty; and to have become æsthetically cadaverous and blear-eyed through the action of inspired dyspepsia. Now I am obliged to confess that I have done none of these things, which, to quote the Prayer-book, I ought to have done. I have had no difficulty in making my career or winning my public. And I attribute my good fortune to the simple fact that I have always tried to write straight from my own heart to the hearts of others, regardless of opinions and indifferent to results. My object in writing has never been, and never will be, to concoct a mere story which shall bring me in a certain amount of cash or notoriety, but solely because I wish to say something which, be it ill or well said, is the candid and independent expression of a thought which I will have uttered at all risks.

In this spirit I wrote my first book, "A Romance of Two Worlds," now in its seventh edition. It was the simply-worded narration of a singular psychical experience, and included certain theories on religion which I, personally speaking, accept and believe. I had no sort of literary pride in my work whatsoever; there was nothing of self in the wish I had, that my ideas, such as they were, should reach the public, for I had no particular need of money, and certainly no hankering after fame. When the book was written I doubted whether it would ever find a publisher, though I determined to try and launch it if possible. My notion

was to offer it to Arrowsmith as a shilling railway volume, under the title "Lifted Up." But in the interim, as a kind of test of its merit or demerit, I sent the MS. to Mr. George Bentley, head of the long-established and famous Bentley publishing firm. It ran the gauntlet of his "readers" first, and they all advised its summary rejection. Among these "readers" at that time was Mr. Hall Caine. His strictures on my work were peculiarly bitter,



VILLA OCCUPIED BY MISS MARIE CORELLI ON THE LAKE OF GENEVA.

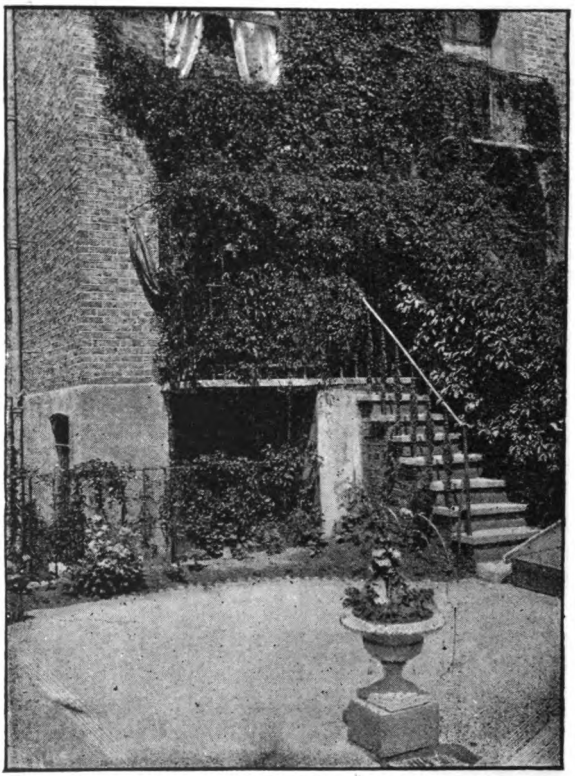
though, strange to relate, he afterwards forgot the nature of his own report. For, on being introduced to me at a ball given by Miss Eastlake, when my name was made and my success assured, he blandly remarked, before a select circle of interested auditors, that he "had had the pleasure of *recommending*" my first book to Mr. Bentley! Comment on this were needless and unkind: he tells stories so admirably that I readily excuse him for his

"slip of memory," and accept the whole incident as a delightful example of his inventive faculty.

His severe judgment pronounced upon me, combined with similar, but perhaps milder, severity on the part of the other "readers," had, however, an unexpected result. Mr. George Bentley, moved by curiosity, and possibly by compassion for the impending fate of a young woman so "sat upon" by his selected censors, decided to read my MS. himself. Happily for me, the consequence of his unprejudiced and impartial perusal was acceptance; and I still keep the kind and encouraging letter he wrote to me at the time, informing me of his decision, and stating the terms of his offer. These terms were, a sum down for one year's rights, the copyright of the work to remain my own entire property. I did not then understand what an advantage this retaining of my copyright in my own possession was to prove to me, financially speaking; but I am willing to do Mr. Bentley the full justice of supposing that he foresaw the success of the book; and that, therefore, his action in leaving me the sole owner of my then very small literary estate, redounds very much to his credit, and is an evident proof, amongst many, of his manifest honour and integrity. Of course, the copyright of an unsuccessful book is valueless; but my "Romance" was destined to prove a sound investment, though I never dreamed that it would be so. Glad of my chance of reaching the public with what I had to say, I gratefully closed with Mr. Bentley's proposal. He considered the title "Lifted Up" as lacking attractiveness; it was therefore discarded, and Mr. Eric Mackay, the poet, gave the book its present name, "A Romance of Two Worlds."

Once published, the career of the "Romance" became singular, and totally apart from that of any other so-called "novel." It only received four reviews, all brief and distinctly unfavourable. The one which appeared in the dignified *Morning Post* is a fair sample of the rest. I keep it by me preciously, because it serves as a wholesome tonic to my mind, and proves to me that when a leading journal can so "review" a book, one need fear nothing from the literary knowledge, acumen, or discernment of reviewers. I quote it *verbatim*: "Miss Corelli would have been better advised had she embodied her ridiculous ideas in a sixpenny pamphlet. The names of Heliobas and Zara are alone sufficient indications of the dullness of this book." This was all. No explanation was vouchsafed as to why my ideas were "ridiculous," though such explanation was justly due; nor did the reviewer state why he

(or she) found the "names" of characters "sufficient indications of dullness, a curious discovery which I believe is unique. However, the so-called "critique" did one good thing; it moved me to sincere laughter, and showed me what I might expect from the critical brethren in these days—days which can no longer boast of a Lord Macaulay, a brilliant, if bitter, Jeffrey, or a generous Sir Walter Scott.



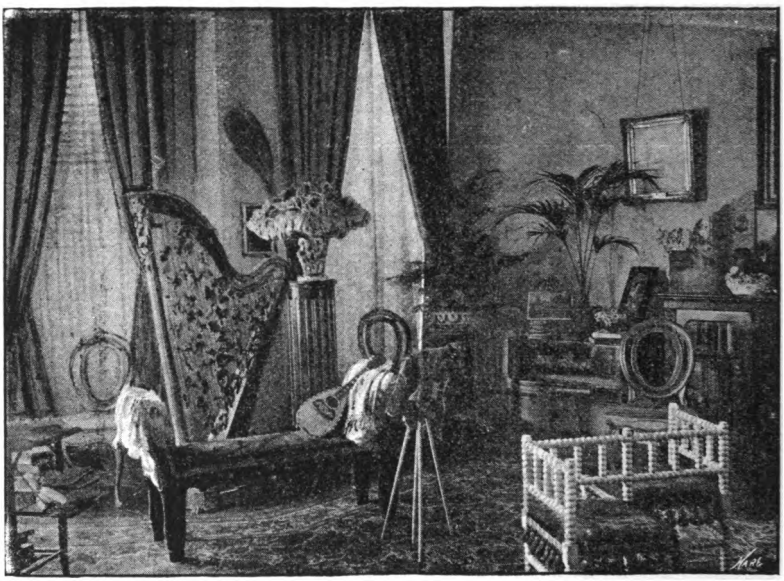
MISS MARIE CORELLI'S HOUSE IN KENSINGTON (BACK VIEW).

To resume: the four "notices" having been grudgingly bestowed, the press "dropped" the "Romance," considering, no doubt, that it was "quashed," and would die the usual death of "women's novels," as they are contemptuously called, in the prescribed year. But it did nothing of the sort. Ignored by the press, it attracted the public. Letters concerning it and its theories began to pour in from strangers in all parts of the United

Kingdom—and at the end of its twelvemonth's run in the circulating libraries, Mr. Bentley brought it out in one volume in his "Favorite" series. Then it started off at full gallop—the "great majority" got at it, and what is more, kept at it. It was "pirated" in America; chosen out and liberally paid for by Baron Tauchnitz for the "Tauchnitz" series; translated into various languages on the Continent, and became a topic of social discussion. A perfect ocean of correspondence flowed in upon me from India, Africa, Australia, and America, and at this very time I count through correspondence a host of friends in all parts of the world whom I do not suppose I shall ever see; friends who even carry their enthusiasm so far as to place their houses at my disposal for a year or two years—and surely the force of hospitality can no further go! With all these attentions, I began to find out the advantage my practical publisher had given me in the retaining of my copyright—my "royalties" commenced, increased, and accumulated with every quarter, and at the present moment continue still to accumulate, so much so, that the "Romance of Two Worlds" alone, apart from all my other works, is the source of a very pleasant income. And I have great satisfaction in knowing that its prolonged success is not due to any influence save that which is contained within itself. It certainly has not been helped on by the press, for since I began my career six years ago, I have never had a word of open encouragement or kindness from any leading English critic. The only real "reviews" I ever received worthy of the name appeared in the *Spectator* and the *Literary World*. The first was on my book "Ardath: The Story of a Dead Self," and in this the over-abundant praise in the beginning was all smothered by the unmitigated abuse at the end. The second in the *Literary World* was eminently generous; it dealt with my last book, "The Soul of Lilith." So taken aback was I with surprise at receiving an all-through kindly, as well as scholarly, criticism from any quarter of the press, that, though I knew nothing about the *Literary World*, I wrote a letter of thanks to my unknown reviewer, begging the editor to forward it in the right direction. He did so, and my generous critic turned out to be—a woman—a literary woman too, fighting a hard fight herself, who would have had an excuse to "slate" me as an unrequired rival in literature had she so chosen, but who, instead of this easy course, adopted the more difficult path of justice and unselfishness.

After the "Romance of Two Worlds" I wrote "Vendetta";

then followed "Thelma," and then "Ardath: The Story of a Dead Self," which, among other purely personal rewards, brought me a charming autograph letter from the late Lord Tennyson, full of valuable encouragement. Then followed "Wormwood: A Drama of Paris"—now in its fifth edition; "Ardath" and "Thelma" being in their seventh editions. My publishers seldom advertise the number of my editions, which is, I suppose, the reason why the continuous "run" of the books escapes the press comment of the "great success" supposed to attend various other novels which only attain to third or fourth editions. "The Soul of

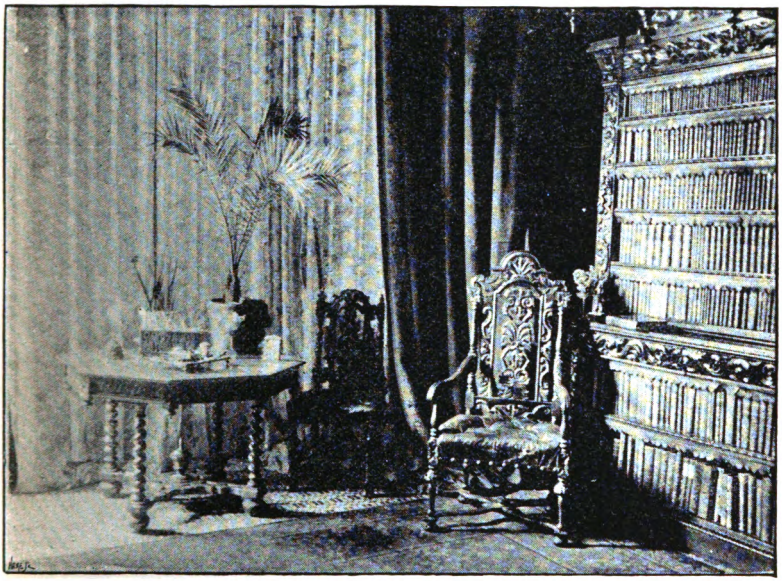


THE DRAWING-ROOM.

Lilith," published only last year, ran through four editions in three-volume form; it is issued now in one volume by Messrs. Bentley, to whom, however, I have not offered any new work. A change of publishers is sometimes advisable; though I have a sincere personal liking for Mr. George Bentley, who is himself an author of distinct originality and ability, though his literary gifts are only known to his own private circle. His book of essays, entitled "After Business," is a delightful volume, full of point and brilliancy, two specially admirable papers being the ones on Villon and Carlyle, while it would be difficult to discover a more

"taking" prose bit than the concluding chapter, "Under An Old Poplar."

A very foolish and erroneous rumour has of late been circulated concerning me, asserting that I owe a great measure of my literary success to the kindly recognition and interest of the Queen. I take the present opportunity to clear up this perverse misunderstanding. My books have been running successfully through several editions for six years, and the much-commented-upon presentation of a complete set of them to Her Majesty took place only last year. If it were possible to regret the honour of



THE LIBRARY.

the Queen's acceptance of these volumes, I should certainly have cause to do so, as the extraordinary spite and malice that has since been visited on my unoffending head has shown me a very bad side of human nature, which I am sorry to have seen. There is very little cause to envy me in this matter. I have but received the courteously formal thanks of the Queen and the Empress Frederick, conveyed through the medium of their ladies-in-waiting, for the special copies of the books their Majesties were pleased to admire; yet for this simple and quite ordinary honour I have been subjected to such

forms of gratuitous abuse as I did not think possible to a "just and noble" English press. I have often wondered why I was not equally assailed when the Queen of Italy, not content with merely "accepting" a copy of the "Romance of Two Worlds," sent me an autograph portrait of herself, accompanied by a charming letter, a souvenir which I value, not at all because the sender is a Queen, but because she is a sweet and noble woman whose every action is marked by grace and unselfishness, and who has deservedly won the title given her by her people, "the blessing of Italy." I repeat, I owe nothing whatever of my popularity, such as it is, to any "royal" notice or favour, though I am naturally glad to have been kindly recognised and encouraged by those "thronëd powers" who command the nation's utmost love and loyalty. But my appeal for a hearing was first made to the great public, and the public responded; moreover, they do still respond with so much heartiness and goodwill, that I should be the most ungrateful scribbler that ever scribbled if I did not (despite press "drubbings" and the amusing total ignoring of my very existence by certain cliquey literary magazines) take up my courage in both hands, as the French say, and march steadily onward to such generous cheering and encouragement.

I am told by an eminent literary authority that critics are "down upon me" because I write about the supernatural. I do not entirely believe the eminent literary authority, inasmuch as I have not always written about the supernatural. Neither "Vendetta," "Thelma," nor "Wormwood" are supernatural. But, says the eminent literary authority, why write at all, at any time, about the supernatural? Why? Because I feel the existence of the supernatural, and feeling it, I must speak of it. I understand that the religion we profess to follow emanates from the supernatural. And I presume that churches exist for the solemn worship of the supernatural. Wherefore, if the supernatural be thus universally acknowledged as a guide for thought and morals, I fail to see why I, and as many others as choose to do so, should not write on the subject. An author has quite as much right to characterise angels and saints in his or her pages as a painter has to depict them on his canvas. And I do not keep my belief in the supernatural as a sort of special mood to be entered into on Sundays only; it accompanies me in my daily round, and helps me along in all my business. But I distinctly wish it to be understood that I am neither a "Spiritualist" nor a "Theosophist." I am not a "strong-minded" woman, with egotistical ideas of a

"mission." I have no other supernatural belief save that which is taught by the Founder of our Faith, and this can never be shaken from me or "sneered down." If critics object to my dealing with this in my books they are very welcome to do so; their objections will not turn me from what they are pleased to consider the error of my ways. I know that unrelieved naturalism and atheism are much more admired subjects with the critical faculty—but the public differ from this view. The public, being in the main healthy-minded and honest, do not care for positivism and pessimism. They like to believe in something better than them-

THE STUDY

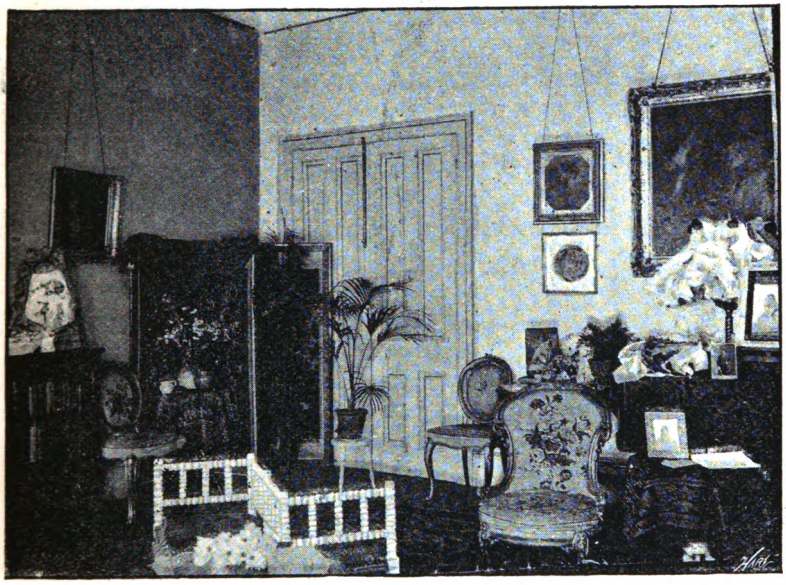
selves; they like to rest on the ennobling idea that there is a great loving Maker of this splendid Universe, and they have no lasting affection for any author whose tendency and teaching is to despise the hope of heaven, and "reason away" the existence of God. It is very clever, no doubt, and very brilliant to deny the Creator; it is as if a monkey should, while being caged and fed by man, deny man's existence. Such a circumstance would make us laugh, of course; we should think it uncommonly "smart" of the monkey. But we should not take his statement for a fact all the same.

Of the mechanical part of my work there is little to say.

I write every day from ten in the morning till two in the afternoon, alone and undisturbed, save for the tinpot tinkling of unmusical neighbours' pianos, and the perpetual organ-grinding which is freely permitted to interfere *ad libitum* with the quiet and comfort of all the patient brain-workers who pay rent and taxes in this great and glorious metropolis. I generally scribble off the first rough draft of a story very rapidly in pencil—then I copy it out in pen and ink, chapter by chapter, with fastidious care, not only because I like a neat manuscript, but because I think everything that is worth doing at all is worth doing well; and I do not see why my publishers should have to pay for more printers' errors than the printers themselves make necessary. I find, too, that in the gradual process of copying by hand, the original draft, like a painter's first sketch, gets improved and enlarged. No one sees my manuscript before it goes to press, as I am now able to refuse to submit my work to the judgment of "readers." These worthies treated me roughly in the beginning, but they will never have the chance again. I correct my proofs myself, though I regret to say my instructions and revisions are not always followed. In my novel "Wormwood" I corrected the French article "*le* chose" to "*la* chose" three times, but apparently the printers preferred their own French, for it is still "*le* chose" in the "Favorite" edition, and the error is stereotyped. In accordance with the arrangement made by Mr. George Bentley for my first book, I retain to myself sole possession of all my copyrights, and as all my novels are successes, the financial results are distinctly pleasing. America, of course, is always a thorn in the side of an author. The "Romance," "Vendetta," "Thelma" and "Ardath" were all "pirated" over there before the passing of the American Copyright Act, it being apparently out of Messrs. Bentley and Son's line to make even an attempt to protect my rights. After the Act was passed, I was paid a sum for "Wormwood," and a larger sum for "The Soul of Lilith," but, as everyone knows, the usual honorarium offered by American publishers for the rights of a successful English novel are totally inadequate to the sales they are able to command. American critics, however, have been very good to me. They have at least read my books before starting to review them, which is a great thing. I have always kept my "Tauchnitz" rights, and very pleasant have all my dealings been with the courteous and generous Baron. All wanderers on the Continent love the "Tauchnitz" volumes—their neatness, handy

form, and remarkably clear type give them precedence over every other foreign series. Baron Tauchnitz pays his authors excellently well, and takes a literary as well as commercial interest in their fortunes.

Perhaps one of the pleasantest things connected with my "success" is the popularity I have won in many quarters of the Continent without any exertion on my own part. My name is as well known in Germany as anywhere, while in Sweden they have been good enough to elect me as one of their favourite authors, thanks to the admirable translations made of all my books by

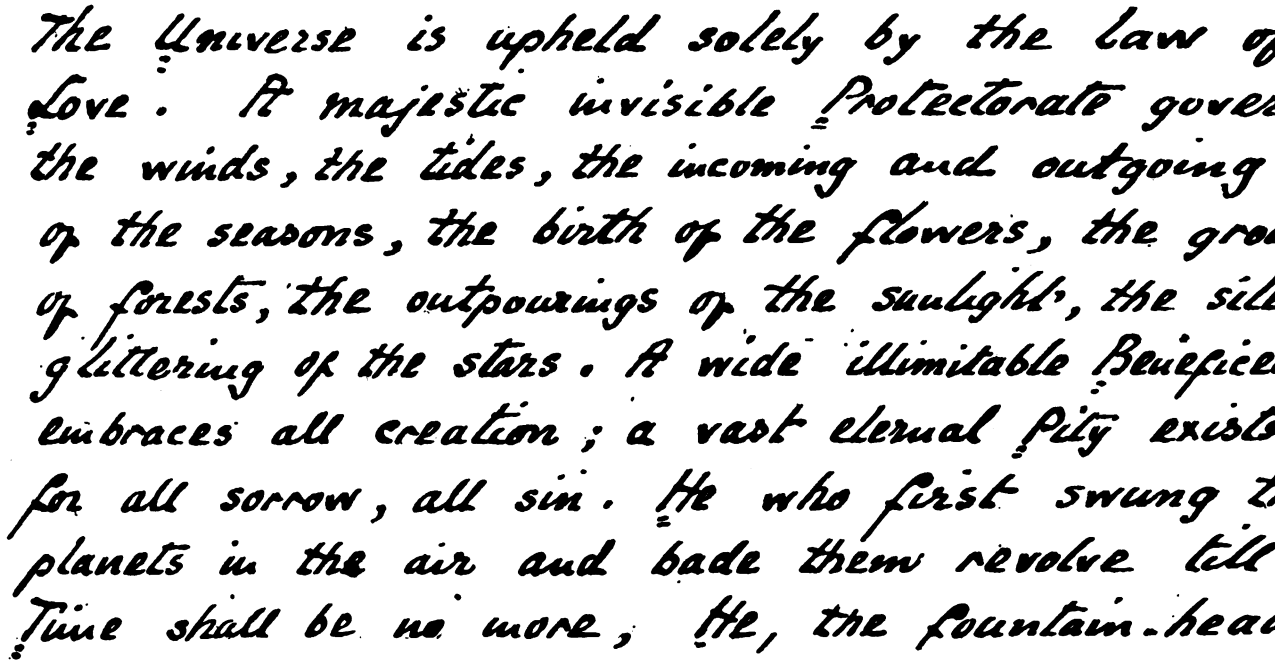


A COSY CORNER.

Miss Emilie Kullmann, of Stockholm, whose energy did not desert her even when she had so difficult a task to perform as the rendering of "Ardath" into Swedish. In Italy and Spain "Vendetta," translated into the languages of those countries, is popular. Madame Emma Guarducci-Giaconi is the translator of "Wormwood" into Italian, and her almost literal and perfect rendering has been running as the *feuilleton* in the Florentine journal, *La Nazione*, under the title "L'Alcoolismo: Un Dramma di Parigi." The "Romance of Two Worlds" is to be had in Russian, so I am told; and it will shortly be published at Athens,

rendered into modern Greek. While engaged in writing this article, I have received a letter asking for permission to translate this same "Romance" into one of the dialects of North-west India, a request I shall very readily grant. In its Eastern dress the book will, I understand, be published at Lucknow. I may here state that I gain no financial advantage from these numerous translations, nor do I seek any. Sometimes the translators do not even ask my permission to translate, but content themselves with sending me a copy of the book when completed, without any word of explanation.

And now to wind up; if I have made a name, if I have made a career, as it seems I have, I have only one piece of pride connected with it. Not pride in my work, for no one with a grain of sense or modesty would, in these days, dare to consider his or her literary efforts of much worth, as compared with what has already been done by the past great authors. My pride is simply this, that I have fought my fight alone, and that I have no thanks to offer to any one, save those legitimately due to the publisher who launched my first book, but who, it must be remembered, would, as a good business man, have unquestionably published nothing else of mine had I been a failure. I count no "friend on the press," and I owe no "distinguished critic" any debt of gratitude. I have come, by happy chance, straight into close and sympathetic union with my public, and attained to independence and good fortune while still young and able to enjoy both. An "incomprehensibly successful" novelist I was called last summer by an irritated correspondent of *Life*, who chanced to see me sharing in the full flow of pleasure and social amusement during the "season" at Homburg. Well, if it be so, this "incomprehensible success" has been attained, I rejoice to say, without either "log-roller" or "boom," and were I of the old Greek faith, I should pour a libation to the gods for giving me this victory. Certainly I used to hope for what Britishers aptly call "fair play" from the critics, but I have ceased to expect that now. It is evidently a delight to them to abuse me, else they would not go out of their way to do it; and I have no wish to interfere with either their "copy" or their fun. The public are beyond them altogether. And Literature is like that famous hill told of in the "Arabian Nights," where threatening anonymous voices shouted the most deadly insults and injuries to anyone who attempted to climb it. If the adventurer turned back to listen, he was instantly changed into stone; but if he pressed boldly on, he reached the summit and



FAC-SIMILE OF MARIE CORELLI'S MS. AS PREPARED FOR THE PRESS.

A page of the "Romance of Two Worlds."

found magic talismans. Now I am only at the commencement of the journey, and am ascending the hill with a light heart and in good humour. I hear the taunting voices on all sides, but I do not stop to listen, nor have I once turned back. My eyes are fixed on the distant peak of the mountain, and my mind is set on arriving there if possible. My ambition may be too great, and I may never arrive. That is a matter for the fates to settle. But, in the meanwhile, I enjoy climbing. I have nothing to grumble about. I consider Literature the noblest Art in the world, and have no complaint whatever to urge against it as a profession. Its rewards, whether great or small, are sufficient for me, inasmuch as I love my work, and love makes all things easy.

NOTE.—Since writing the above I have been asked to state whether, in my arrangements for publishing, I employ a "literary agent" or use a "type-writer." I do not. With regard to the first part of the query, I consider that authors, like other people, should learn how to manage their own affairs themselves, and that when they take a paid agent into their confidence, they make open confession of their business incapacity, and voluntarily elect to remain in foolish ignorance of the practical part of their profession. Secondly, I dislike type-writing, and prefer to make my own MS distinctly legible. It takes no more time to write clearly than in spidery hieroglyphics, and a slovenly scribble is no proof of cleverness, but rather of carelessness and a tendency to "scamp" work.

The King of Schnorrers.

By I. Zangwill.

Illustrations by G. Hutchinson.

III.

Shewing how His Majesty went to the theatre and was wooed.

That all men are beggars, 'tis very plain to see,
Though some they are of lowly, and some of high degree:
Your ministers of State will say they never will allow
That kings from subjects beg, but that you know is all bow wow.
Bow wow wow! Fol lol, &c.
—*Old Play.*

AS Manasseh the Great, first beggar in Europe, sauntered across Goodman's Fields, attended by his Polish parasite, both serenely digesting the supper provided by the Treasurer of the Great Synagogue, Joseph Grobstock, a martial music clove suddenly the quiet evening air, and set the *Schnorrers'* pulses bounding. From the Tenterground emerged a squad of recruits, picturesque in white fatigue dress, against which the mounted officers showed gallant in blue surtouts and scarlet-striped trousers.

"Ah!" said da Costa with swelling breast. "There go my soldiers!"

"Your soldiers!" ejaculated Yankele in astonishment.

"Yes—do you not see they are returning to the India House in Leadenhall Street?"

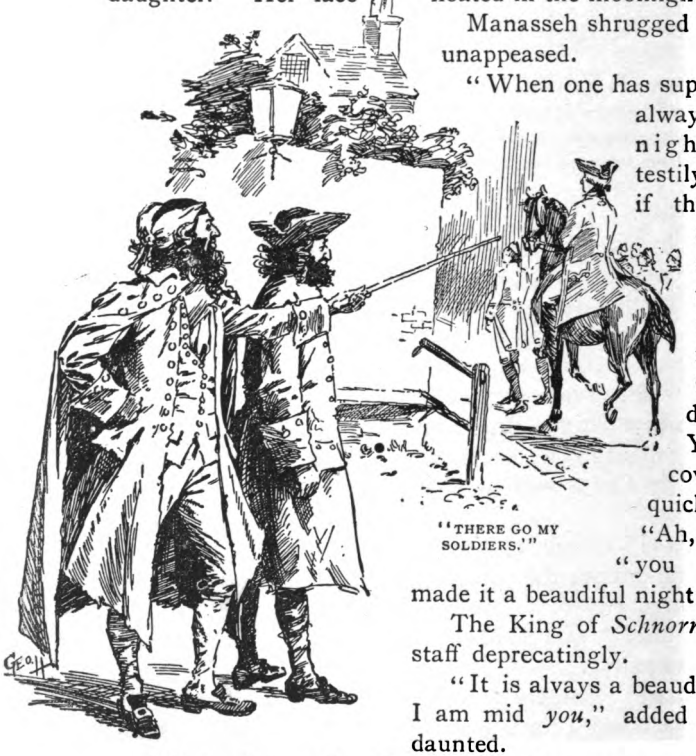
"And vat of dat?" said Yankele, shrugging his shoulders and spreading out his palms.

"What of that? Surely you have not forgotten that the clodpate at whose house I have just entertained you is a Director of the East India Company, whose soldiers these are?"

"Oh," said Yankele, his mystified face relaxing in a smile. The smile fled before the stern look in the Spaniard's eyes; he hastened to conceal his amusement. Yankele was by nature a droll, and it cost him a good deal to take his patron as seriously as that potentate took himself. Perhaps if Manasseh Bueno Barzillai Azevedo da Costa had had more humour he would have had less momentum. Your man of action is blind in one eye. Cæsar would not have come and conquered if he had really seen.

Wounded by that temporary twinkle in his client's eye, the patron moved on silently, in step with the military air.

"It is a beaudiful night," observed Yankele in contrition. The words had hardly passed his lips before he became conscious that he had spoken the truth. The moon was peeping from behind a white cloud, and the air was soft, and broken shadows of foliage lay across the path, and the music was a song of love and bravery. Somehow, Yankele began to think of da Costa's lovely daughter. Her face floated in the moonlight.



"THERE GO MY SOLDIERS.'"

Manasseh shrugged his shoulders, unappeased.

"When one has supped well, it is always a beautiful night," he said testily. It was as if the cloud had overspread the moon, and a thick veil had fallen over the face of da Costa's lovely daughter. But Yankele recovered himself quickly.

"Ah, yes," he said, "you have indeed made it a beaudiful night for me."

The King of *Schnorrers* waved his staff deprecatingly.

"It is alvays a beaudiful night ven I am mid *you*," added Yankele undaunted.

"It is strange," replied Manasseh musingly, "that I should have admitted to my hearth and Grobstock's table one who is, after all, but a half-brother in Israel."

"But Grobstock is also a Tedesco," protested Yankele.

"That is also what I wonder at," rejoined da Costa. "I cannot make out how I have come to be so familiar with him."

"You see!" ventured the Tedesco timidly. "P'raps ven Grobstock had really had a girl you might even have come to marry her."

"Guard your tongue! A Sephardi cannot marry a Tedesco! It would be a degradation."

"Yes—but de oder vay round. A Tedesco *can* marry a Sephardi, not so? Dat is a rise. If Grobstock's daughter had married you, she vould have married above her," he ended with an ingenuous air.

"True," admitted Manasseh. "But then, as Grobstock's daughter does not exist, and my wife does——!"

"Ah, but if you vas me," said Yankele, "vould you rader marry a Tedesco or a Sephardi?"

"A Sephardi, of course. But——"

"I vill be guided by you," interrupted the Pole hastily. "You be de visest man I have ever known."

"But——" Manasseh repeated.

"Do not deny it. You be! Instantly vill I seek out a Sephardi maiden and ved her. P'raps you crown your counsel by choosing von for me. Vot?"

Manasseh was visibly mollified.

"How do I know your taste?" he asked hesitatingly.

"Oh, any Spanish girl vould be a prize," replied Yankele. "Even ven she had a face like a Passover cake. But still I prefer a Pentecost flower."

"What kind of beauty do you like best?"

"Your daughter's style," plumply answered the Pole.

"But there are not many like that," said da Costa unsuspiciously.

"No—she is like de Rose of Sharon. But den dere are not many handsome faders."

Manasseh bethought himself. "There is Gabriel, the corpse-watcher's daughter. People consider his figure and deportment good."

"Pooh! Offal! She's ugly enough to keep de Messiah from coming. Vy, she's like cut out of de fader's face! Besides, consider his occupation! You vould not advise dat I marry into such a low family! Be you not my benefactor?"

"Well, but I cannot think of any good-looking girl that would be suitable."

Yankele looked at him with a roguish, insinuating smile. "Say not dat! Have you not told Grobstock you be de first of marriage-brokers?"

But Manasseh shook his head.

"No, you be quite right," said Yankele humbly; "I could not get a really beaudiful girl unless I married your Deborah herself."

"No, I am afraid not," said Manasseh sympathetically.

Yankele took the plunge.

"Ah, vy can I not hope to call you fader-in-law?"

Manasseh's face was contorted by a spasm of astonishment and indignation. He came to a standstill.

"Dat must be a fine piece," said Yankele quickly, indicating a flamboyant picture of a fearsome phantom hovering over a sombre moat.

They had arrived at Leman Street, and had stopped before the Garrick Theatre. Manasseh's brow cleared.

"It is *The Castle Spectre*," he said graciously. "Would you like to see it?"

"But it is half over ——"

"Oh, no," said da Costa, scanning the playbill. "There was a farce by O'Keefe to start with. The night is yet young. The drama will be just beginning."

"But it is de Sabbath—ve must not pay."

Manasseh's brow clouded again in wrathful righteous surprise. "Did you think I was going to pay?" he gasped.

"N-n-no," stammered the Pole abashed. "But you haven't got no orders?"

"Orders? Me? Will you do me the pleasure of accepting a seat in my box?"

"In your box?"

"Yes, there is plenty of room. Come this way," said Manasseh. "I haven't been to the play myself for over a year. I am too busy always. It will be an agreeable change."

Yankele hung back bewildered.

"Through this door," said Manasseh encouragingly. "Come —you shall lead the way."

"But dey vill not admit me!"

"Will not admit you! When I give you a seat in my box! Are you mad? Now you shall just go in without me—I insist upon it. I will show you Manasseh Bueno Barzillai Azevedo da Costa is a man whose word is the Law of Moses; true as the Talmud. Walk straight through the portico, and, if the attendant endeavours to stop you, simply tell him Mr. da Costa has given you a seat in his box."

Not daring to exhibit scepticism—nay, almost confident in the powers of his extraordinary protector, Yankele put his foot on the threshold of the lobby.

"But you be coming, too?" he said, turning back.

"Oh, yes, I don't intend to miss the performance. Have no fear."

Yankele walked boldly ahead, and brushed by the doorkeeper of the little theatre without appearing conscious of him; indeed, the official was almost impressed into letting the *Schnorrer* pass unquestioned as one who had gone out between the acts. But the visitor was too dingy for anything but the stage-door—he had the air of those nondescript beings who hang mysteriously about the hinder recesses of playhouses. Recovering himself just in time, the functionary (a meek little Cockney) hailed the intruder with a backward-drawing "Hi!"

"Vat you vant?" said Yankele, turning his head.

"Vhere's your ticket?"

"Don't vant no ticket."

"Don't you? I does," rejoined the little man, who was a humorist.

"Mr. da Costa has given me a seat in his box."

"Oh, indeed! You'd swear to that in the box?"

"By my head. He gave it me."

"A seat in his box?"

"Yes."

"Mr. da Costa, you vos a sayin', I think?"

"The same."

"Ah! this vay, then!"

And the humorist pointed to the street.

Yankele did not budge.

"This vay, my lud!" cried the little humorist peremptorily.

"I tells you I'm going into Mr. da Costa's box!"

"And I tells you you're a-goin' into the gutter." And the

"'DAT MUST BE A FINE PIECE."

official seized him by the scruff of the neck and began pushing him forwards with his knee.

"Now then! what's this?"

A stern, angry voice broke like a thunderclap upon the humorist's ears. He released his hold of the *Schnorrer* and looked up, to behold a strange, shabby, stalwart figure towering over him in censorious majesty.

"Why are you hustling this poor man?" demanded Manasseh.

"He wanted to sneak in," the little Cockney replied, half apologetically, half resentfully. "Expect 'e 'ails from Saffron 'Ill, and 'as 'is eye on the vipes. Told me some gammon—a cock-and-bull story about having a seat in a box."

"In Mr. da Costa's box, I suppose?" said Manasseh, ominously calm, with a menacing glitter in his eye.

"Ye-es," said the humorist, astonished and vaguely alarmed. Then the storm burst.

"You impertinent scoundrel! You jackanapes! You low, beggarly rapscallion! And so you refused to show my guest into my box!"

"Are you Mr. da Costa?" faltered the humorist.

"Yes, *I* am Mr. da Costa, but *you* won't much longer be doorkeeper, if this is the way you treat people who come to see your pieces. Because, forsooth, the man looks poor, you think you can bully him safely—forgive me, Yankele, I am so sorry I did not manage to come here before you, and spare you this insulting treatment! And as for you, my fine fellow, let me tell you that you make a great mistake in judging from appearances. There are some good friends of mine who could buy up your theatre and you and your miserable little soul at a moment's notice, and to look at them you would think they were cadgers. One of these days—hark you!—you will kick out a person of quality, and be kicked out yourself."

"I—I'm very sorry, sir."

"Don't say that to me. It is my guest you owe an apology to. Yes—and, by Heaven! you shall pay it, though he is no plutocrat, but only what he appears. Surely, because I wish to give a treat to a poor man who has, perhaps, never been to the play in his life, I am not bound to send him to the gallery—I can give him a corner in my box if I choose. There is no rule against that, I presume?"

"No, sir, I can't say as there is," said the humorist humbly. "But you will allow, sir, it's raythyr unusual."

"Unusual! Of course, it's unusual. Kindness and consideration for the poor are always unusual. The poor are trodden upon at every opportunity, treated like dogs, not men. If I had invited a drunken fop, you'd have met him hat in hand (no, no, you needn't take it off to me now; it's too late). But a sober, poor man—by Gad! I shall report your incivility to the management, and you'll be lucky if I don't thrash you with this stick into the bargain."

"But 'ow vos I to know, sir?"

"Don't speak to me, I tell you. If you have anything to urge in extenuation of your disgraceful behaviour, address your remarks to my guest."

"You'll overlook it this time, sir," said the little humorist, turning to Yankele.

"Next time, p'raps, you believe me ven I say I have a seat in Mr. da Costa's box," replied Yankele in gentle reproach.

"Well, if *you're* satisfied, Yankele," said Manasseh with a touch of scorn, "I have no more to say. Go along, my man, show us to our box."

The official bowed and led them into the corridor. Suddenly he turned back.

"What box is it, please?" he said timidly.

"Blockhead!" cried Manasseh. "Which box should it be? The empty one, of course."

"But, sir, there are two boxes empty," urged the poor humorist deprecatingly, "the stage-box and the one by the gallery."

"Dolt! Do I look the sort of person who is content with a box on the ceiling? Go back to your post, sir—I ll find the box myself—Heaven send you wisdom—go back, someone might sneak in while you are away, and it would just serve you right."

The little man slunk back half dazed, glad to escape from this overwhelming personality, and in a few seconds Manasseh stalked into the empty box, followed by Yankele, whose mouth was a grin and whose eye a twinkle. As the Spaniard took his seat there was a slight outburst of clapping and stamping from a house impatient for the end of the *entr'acte*.

Manasseh craned his head over the box to see the house, which in turn craned to see him, glad of any diversion, and some people, imagining the applause had reference to the new-comer, whose head appeared to be that of a foreigner of distinction, joined in it. The contagion spread, and in a minute Manasseh was

"'NOW THEN! WHAT'S THIS?'"

the cynosure of all eyes and the unmistakable recipient of an "ovation." He bowed twice or thrice in unruffled dignity.

There were some who recognised him, but they joined in the reception with wondering amusement. Not a few, indeed, of the audience were Jews, for the Garrick Theatre was the Ghetto Theatre, and the Sabbath was not a sufficient deterrent to a lax generation. The audiences—mainly German and Poles—came to the little unfashionable playhouse as one happy family. Distinctions of rank were trivial, and gallery held converse with circle, and pit collogued with box. Supper parties were held on the benches.

In a box that gave on the pit a portly Jewess sat stiffly, arrayed in the very pink of fashion, in an elegant spangled robe of India muslin, with a diamond necklace and crescent, her head crowned by terraces of curls and flowers.

"Betsy!" called up a jovial feminine voice from the pit, when the applause had subsided.

"Betsy" did not move, but her cheeks grew hot and red. She had got on in the world, and did not care to recognise her old crony.

"Betsy!" iterated the well-meaning woman. "By your life and mine, you must taste a piece of my fried fish." And she held up a slice of cold plaice, beautifully browned.

Betsy drew back, striving unsuccessfully to look unconscious. To her relief the curtain rose, and *The Castle Spectre* walked. Yankele, who had scarcely seen anything but private theatricals, representing the discomfiture of the wicked Haman and the triumph of Queen Esther (a *rôle* he had once played himself, in his mother's old clothes), was delighted with the thrills and terrors of the ghostly melodrama. It was not till the conclusion of the second act that the emotion the beautiful but injured heroine cost him welled over again into matrimonial speech.

"Ve vind up de night glorious," he said.

"I am glad you like it. It is certainly an enjoyable performance," Manasseh answered with stately satisfaction.

"Your daughter, Deborah," Yankele ventured timidly, "do she ever go to de play?"

"No, I do not take my womankind about. Their duty lies at home. As it is written: I call my wife not 'wife' but 'home.'"

"But tink how dey vould enjoy deirselves!"

"We are not sent here to enjoy ourselves."

"True—most true," said Yankele, pulling a smug face. "Ve be sent here to obey de Law of Moses. But do not remind me I be a sinner in Israel."

"How so?"

"I am twenty-five—yet I have no vife."

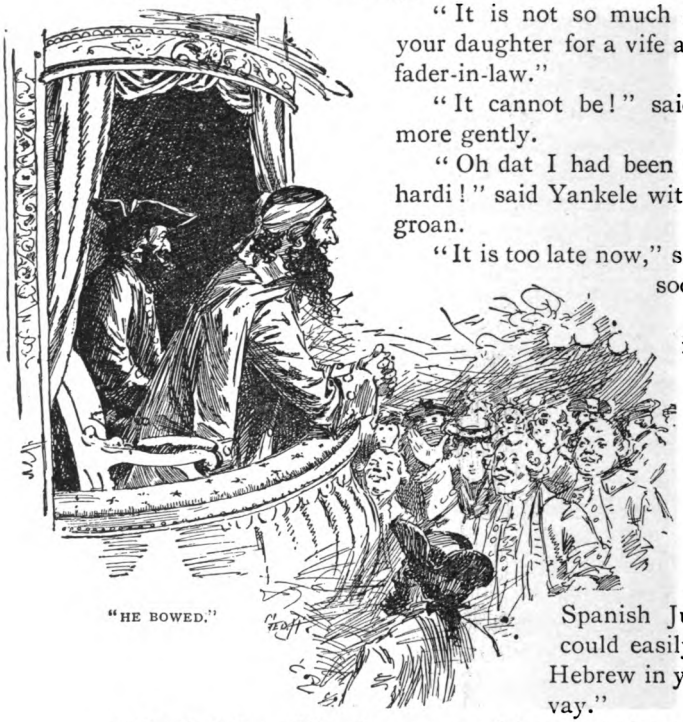
"I daresay you had plenty in Poland."

"By my soul, not. Only von, and her I gave *geff* (divorce) for barrenness. You can write to de Rabbi of my town."

"Why should I write? It's not my affair."

"But I vant it to be your affair."

Manasseh glared. "Do you begin that again?" he murmured.



"HE BOWED."

"It is not so much dat I desire your daughter for a vife as you for a fader-in-law."

"It cannot be!" said Manasseh more gently.

"Oh dat I had been born a Sephardi!" said Yankele with a hopeless groan.

"It is too late now," said da Costa soothingly.

"Dey say it's never too late to mend," moaned the Pole. "Is dere no vay for me to be converted to Spanish Judaism? I could easily pronounce Hebrew in your superior vay."

"Our Judaism differs in no essential respect from yours—it is a question of blood. You cannot change your blood. As it is said, 'And the blood is the life.'"

"I know, I know dat I aspire too high. Oh, vy did you become my friend, vy did you make me believe you cared for me—so dat I tink of you day and night—and now, ven I ask you to be my fader-in-law, you say it cannot be. It is like a knife in de heart! Tink how proud and happy I should be to call you my fader-in-law. All my life vould be devoted to you—my one thought to be vordy of such a man."

"You are not the first I have been compelled to refuse," said Manasseh with emotion.

"Vat helps me dat dere be other *Schlemihls* (unlucky persons)?" quoted Yankele with a sob. "How can I live midout you for a fader-in-law?"

"I am sorry for you—more sorry than I have ever been."

"Den you do care for me! I vill not give up hope. I vill not take no for answer. Vat is dis blood dat it should divide Jew from Jew, dat it should prevent me becoming de son-in-law of de only man I have ever loved? Say not so. Let me ask you again—in a month or a year—even twelve months vould I vait, ven you vould only promise not to pledge yourself to anoder man."

"But if I became your father-in-law—mind, I only say if—not only would I not keep you, but you would have to keep my Deborah."

"And supposing?"

"But you are not able to keep a wife!"

"Not able? Who told you dat?" cried Yankele indignantly.

"You yourself! Why, when I first befriended you, you told me you were blood-poor."

"Dat I told you as a *Schnorrer*. But now I speak to you as a suitor."

"True," admitted Manasseh, instantly appreciating the distinction.

"And as a suitor I tell you I can *schnorr* enough to keep two vives."

"But do you tell this to da Costa the father or da Costa the marriage-broker?"

"Hush!" from all parts of the house as the curtain went up and the house settled down. But Yankele was no longer in *rapport* with the play; the spectre had ceased to thrill and the heroine to touch. His mind was busy with feverish calculations of income, scraping together every penny he could raise by hook or crook. He even drew out a crumpled piece of paper and a pencil, but thrust them back into his pocket when he saw Manasseh's eye.

"I forgot," he murmured apologetically. "Being in a theatre made me forget it was the Sabbath." And he pursued his calculations mentally; this being naturally less work.

When the play was over the two beggars walked out into the cool night air.

"I find," Yankele began eagerly in the vestibule, "I make at least von hundred and fifty pounds"—he paused to acknowledge

the farewell salutation of the little doorkeeper at his elbow—"a hundred and fifty a year."

"Indeed!" said Manasseh, in respectful astonishment.

"Yes! I have reckoned it all up. Ten are de sources of charity——"

"As it is written," interrupted Manasseh with unction, "'With ten sayings was the world created; there were ten generations from Noah to Abraham; with ten trials our father Abraham was tried; ten miracles were wrought for our fathers in Egypt and ten at the Red Sea; and ten things were created on the eve of the Sabbath in the twilight!' And now it shall be added, 'Ten good deeds the poor man affords the rich man.' Proceed, Yankele."

"First comes my allowance from de Synagogue—eight pounds. Vonce a veek I call and receive half-a-crown."

"Is that all? Our Synagogue allows three-and-six."

"Ah!" sighed the Pole wistfully. "Did I not say you be a superior race?"

"But that only makes six pound ten!"

"I know—de oder tirty shillings I allow for Passover cakes and groceries. Den for Synagogue-knocking I get ten guin——"

"Stop! stop!" cried Manasseh with a sudden scruple. "Ought I to listen to financial details on the Sabbath?"

"Certainly, ven dey be connected vid my marriage—vich is a Commandment. It is de Law ve really discuss."

"You are right. Go on, then. But remember, even if you can prove you can *schnorr* enough to keep a wife, I do not bind myself to consent."

"You be already a fader to me—vy vill you not be a fader-in-law? Anyhow, you vill find me a fader-in-law," he added hastily, seeing the blackness gathering again on da Costa's brow.

"Nay, nay, we must not talk of business on the Sabbath," said Manasseh evasively. "Proceed with your statement of income."

"Ten guineas for Synagogue-knocking. I have tventy clients who——"

"Stop a minute! I cannot pass that item.'

"Vy not? It is true."

"Maybe! But Synagogue-knocking is distinctly *work!*"

"Vork?"

"Well, if going round early in the morning to knock at the doors of twenty pious persons, and rouse them for morning service, isn't work, then the Christian bell-ringer is a beggar. No, no! Profits from this source I cannot regard as legitimate."

"But most *Schnorrers* are Synagogue-knockers!"

"Most *Schnorrers* are congregation-men or psalms-men," retorted the Spaniard witheringly. "But I call it debasing. What! To assist at the services for a fee! To worship one's Maker for hire! Under such conditions to pray is to work." His breast swelled with majesty and scorn.

"I cannot call it vork," protested the *Schnorrer*. "Vy at dat rate you vould make out dat de minister vorks? or de preacher? Vy, I reckon fourteen pounds a year to my services as congregation-man."

"Fourteen pounds! As much as that?"

"Yes, you see dere's my private customers as vell as de Synagogue. Ven dere is mourning in a house dey cannot alvays get together ten friends for de services, so I make von. How can you call that vork? It is friendship. And the more dey pay me de more friendship I feel," asserted Yankele with a twinkle. "Den de Synagogue allows me a little extra for announcing de dead."

"PUT SOMETHING INTO THE PYX."

In those primitive times, when a Jewish newspaper was undreamt of, the day's obituary was published by a peripatetic *Schnorrer*, who went about the Ghetto rattling a pyx—a copper money-box with a handle and a lid closed by a padlock. On hearing this death-rattle, anyone who felt curious would ask the *Schnorrer*:

"Who's dead to-day?"

"So-and-so ben So-and-so—funeral on such a day—mourning service at such an hour," the *Schnorrer* would reply, and the enquirer would piously put something into the "pyx," as it was called. The collection was handed over to the Holy Society—in other words, the Burial Society.

"P'raps you call that vork?" concluded Yankele in timid challenge.

"Of course I do. What do you call it?"

"Valking exercise. It keeps me healty. Vonce von of my customers (from whom I *schnorred* half-a-crown a veek) said he was tired of my coming and getting it every Friday. He vanted to compound mid me for six pound a year, but I vouldn't."

"But it was a very fair offer. He only deducted ten shillings for the interest on his money."

"Dat I didn't mind. But I vanted a pound more for his depriving me of my valking exercise, and dat he vouldn't pay, so he still goes on giving me de half-crown a veek. Some of dese charitable persons are terribly mean. But vat I vant to say is dat I carry de pyx mostly in the streets vere my customers lay, and it gives me more standing as a *Schnorrer*."

"No, no, that is a delusion. What! Are you weak-minded enough to believe that? All the philanthropists say so, of course, but surely you know that *schnorring* and work should never be mixed. A man cannot do two things properly. He must choose his profession, and stick to it. A friend of mine once succumbed to the advice of the philanthropists instead of asking mine. He had one of the best provincial rounds in the kingdom, but in every town he weakly listened to the lectures of the president of the congregation inculcating work, and at last he actually invested the savings of years in jewellery, and went round trying to peddle it. The presidents all bought something to encourage him (though they beat down the price so that there was no profit in it), and they all expressed their pleasure at his working for his living, and showing a manly independence. 'But I *schnorr* also,' he reminded them, holding out his hand when they had finished. It was in vain. No one gave him a farthing. He had blundered beyond redemption. At one blow he had destroyed one of the most profitable connections a *Schnorrer* ever had, and without even getting anything for the goodwill. So if you will be guided by me, Yankele, you will do nothing to assist the philanthropists to keep you. It destroys their satisfaction. A *Schnorrer* cannot be too careful. And once you begin to work, where are you to draw the line?"

"But you are a marriage-broker yourself," said Yankele imprudently.

"That!" thundered Manasseh angrily, "That is not work! That is pleasure!"

"Vy dere is Hennery Simons," cried Yankele, hoping to divert his attention. But he only made matters worse.

Henry Simons was a character variously known as the Tumbling Jew, Harry the Dancer, and the Juggling Jew. He was afterwards to become famous as the hero of a slander case which deluged England with pamphlets for and against, but for the present he had merely outraged the feelings of his fellow

Schnorrers by budding out in a direction so rare as to suggest preliminary baptism. He stood now playing antic and sleight-of-hand tricks—surrounded by a crowd—a curious figure crowned by a velvet skull-cap from which wisps of hair protruded, with a scarlet handkerchief thrust through his girdle. His face was an olive oval, bordered by ragged tufts of beard and stamped with melancholy.

"You see the results of working," cried Manasseh. "It brings temptation to work on Sabbath. That Epicurean there is profaning the Holy Day. Come away! A *Schnorrer* is far more certain of The-World-To-Come. No, decidedly, I will not give my daughter to a worker, or to a *Schnorrer* who makes illegitimate profits."

"But I *make* de profits all de same," persisted Yankele.

"You make them to-day—but to-morrow? There is no certainty about them. Work of whatever kind is by its very nature unreliable. At any moment trade may be slack. People may become less pious, and you lose your Synagogue-knocking. Or more pious—and they won't want congregation-men.'

"But new Synagogues spring up," urged Yankele.

"New Synagogues are full of enthusiasm," retorted Manasseh. "The members are their own congregation-men."

Yankele had his roguish twinkle. "At first," he admitted, "but de *Schnorrer* vaits his time."

Manasseh shook his head. "*Schnorring* is the only occupation that is regular all the year round," he said. "Everything else may fail—the greatest commercial houses may totter to the ground; as it is written, 'He humbleth the proud.' But the *Schnorrer* is always secure. Whoever falls, there are always enough left to look after *him*. If you were a father, Yankele, you would understand my feelings. How can a man allow his daughter's future happiness to repose on a basis so uncertain as work? No, no. What do you make by your district visiting? Everything turns on that."

"Tventy-five shilling a veek!"

"Really?"

"Law of Moses! In sixpences, shillings, and half-crowns. Vy in Houndsditch alone, I have two streets all except a few houses."

"But are they safe? Population shifts. Good streets go down."

"Dat tventy-five shillings is as safe as Mocatta's business. I have it all written down at home—you can inspect de books if you choose."

"No, no," said Manasseh, with a grand wave of his stick. "If I did not believe you I should not entertain your proposal for a moment. It rejoices me exceedingly to find you have devoted so much attention to this branch. I always held strongly that the rich should be visited in their own homes, and I grieve to see this personal touch, this contact with the very people to whom you give the good deeds, replaced by lifeless circulars. One owes it to one's position in life to afford the wealthy classes the opportunity of charity warm from the heart; they should not be neglected and driven in their turn to write cheques in cold blood, losing all that human sympathy which comes from personal intercourse—as it is written, 'Charity delivers from death.' But do you think charity that is given publicly through a secretary and advertised in annual reports has so great a redeeming power as that slipped privately into the hands of the poor man, who makes a point of keeping secret from every donor what he has received from the others?"

"'YOUR FADER VAS A GREAT AND GOOD MAN—JUST MY SIZE.'"

"I am glad you don't call collecting de money vork," said Yankele with a touch of sarcasm which was lost on da Costa.

"No, so long as the donor can't show any 'value received' in return. And there's more friendship in *such* a call, Yankele, than in going to a house of mourning to pray for a fee."

"Oh," said Yankele wincing, "Den p'raps you strike out all my Year-Time item!"

"Year-Time! What's that?"

"Don't you know?" said the Pole astonished. "Ven a man has Year-Time he feels charitable for de day."

"Do you mean when he commemorates the anniversary of the

death of one of his family? We Sephardim call that 'making years!' But are there enough Year-Times, as you call them, in your Synagogue?"

"Dere might be more—I only make about fifteen pounds. Our colony is, as you say, too new. De Globe Road Cemetery is as empty as a Synagogue on veek-days. De faders have left *deir* faders on de Continent, and kept many Year-Times out of de country. But in a few years many faders and moders must die off here, and every parent leaves two or tree sons to have Year-Times, and every child two or tree broders and a fader. Den every day more German Jews come here—vich means more and more to die. I tink indeed it would be fair to double this item."

"No, no; stick to facts. It is an iniquity to speculate in the misfortunes of our fellow-creatures."

"Somebody must die dat I may live," retorted Yankele roguishly; "de vorld is so created. Did you not quote, 'Charity delivers from death'? If people lived for ever, *Schnorrers* could not live at all."

"Hush! The world could not exist without *Schnorrers*. As it is written, 'And Repentance and *Prayer* and CHARITY avert the evil decree.' Charity is put last—it is the climax—the greatest thing on earth. And the *Schnorrer* is the greatest man on earth; for it stands in the Talmud, 'He who causes is greater than he who does.' Therefore, the *Schnorrer* who causes charity is even greater than he who gives it."

"Talk of de devil," said Yankele, who had much difficulty in keeping his countenance when Manasseh became magnificent and dithyrambic. "Vy, dere is Greenbaum, whose fader vas buried yesterday. Let us cross over by accident and vish him long life."

"Greenbaum! Was that the Greenbaum on 'Change, who was such a rascal with the wenches?"

"De same," said Yankele. Then approaching the son, he cried, "Good Sabbath, Mr. Greenbaum; I vish you long life. Vat a blow for de community!"

"It comforts me to hear you say so," said the son, with a sob in his voice.

"Ah, yes!" said Yankele chokingly. "Your fader vas a great and good man—just my size."

"I've already given them away to Baruch the glazier," replied the mourner.

"But he has his glaziering," remonstrated Yankele. "I have

noting but de clothes I stand in, and dey don't fit me half so vell as your fader's vould have done."

"Baruch has been very unfortunate," replied Greenbaum defensively. "He had a misfortune in the winter, and he has never got straight yet. A child of his died, and, unhappily, just when the snowballing was at its height, so that he lo: ' even days by the mourning." And he moved away.

"Did I not say work was uncertain?" cried Manasseh.

"Not all," maintained the *Schnorrer*. "What of de six guineas I make by carrying round de Palm-branch on Tabernacles to be shaken by de voomans who cannot attend Synagogue, and by blowing de trumpet for de same voomans on New Year, so dat dey may break deir fasts?"

"The amount is too small to deserve discussion. Pass on."

"Dere is a smaller amount—just half dat—I get from de presents to de poor at de Feast of Lots, and from de Bridegrooms of de Beginning and de Bridegrooms of de Law at de Rejoicing of de Law, and dere is about four pounds ten a year from de sale of clothes given to me. Den I have a lot o' meals given me—dis, I have reckoned, is as good as seven pounds. And, lastly, I cannot count de odds and ends under ten guineas. You know dere are alvays legacies, gifts, distributions—all unexpected. You never know who'll break out next."

"Yes, I think it's not too high a percentage of your income to expect from unexpected sources," admitted Manasseh. "I have myself lingered about 'Change Alley or Jonathan's Coffee House just when the jobbers have pulled off a special coup, and they have paid me quite a high percentage on their profits."

"And I," boasted Yankele, stung to noble emulation, "have made two sov'rans in von minute out of Gideon de bullion-broker. He likes to give *Schnorrers* sov'rans, as if in mistake for shillings, to see vat dey'll do. De fools hurry off, or move slowly avay, as if not noticing, or put it quickly in de pocket. But dose who have visdom tell him he's made a mistake, and he gives dem anoder sov'ran. Honesty is de best policy with Gideon. Den dere is Rabbi de Falk, de Baal Shem—de great Cabbalist. Ven——"

"But," interrupted Manasseh impatiently, "you haven't made out your hundred and fifty a year."

Yankele's face fell. "Not if you cut out so many items."

"No, but all inclusive it only comes to a hundred and forty-three pounds nineteen shillings."

"Nonsense!" said Yankele, staggered. "How can you know so exact?"

"Do you think I cannot do simple addition?" said Manasseh sternly. "Are not these your ten items?"

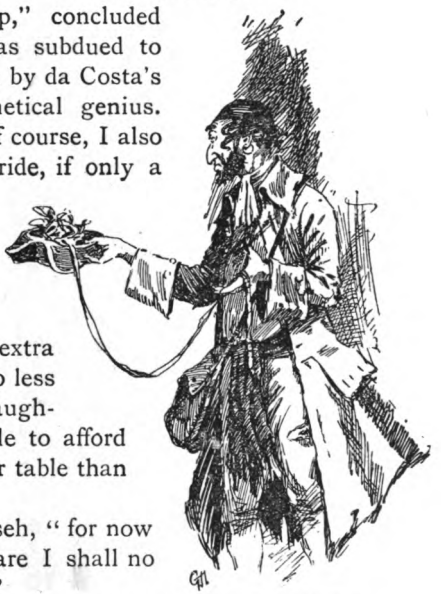
		£	s	d.
1.	Synagogue Pension, with Passover extras	8	0	0
2.	Synagogue-knocking	10	10	0
3.	District Visiting	65	0	0
4.	As Congregation-man and Pyx-bearer	14	0	0
5.	Year-Times	15	0	0
6	Palm-branch and Trumpet Fees	6	6	0
7.	Purim-presents, &c	3	3	0
8	Sale of Clothes	4	10	0
9.	Equivalent of Free Meals	7	0	0
10.	Miscellanea, the unexpected	10	10	0
	Total	£143	19	0

"A child could sum it up," concluded Manasseh severely. Yankele was subdued to genuine respect and consternation by da Costa's marvellous memory and arithmetical genius. But he rallied immediately. "Of course, I also reckoned on a dowry mid my bride, if only a hundred pounds."

"Well, invested in Consols, that would not bring you four pounds more," replied Manasseh instantly.

"The rest vill be made up in extra free meals," Yankele answered no less quickly. "For ven I take your daughter off your hands you vill be able to afford to invite me more often to your table than you do now."

"Not at all," retorted Manasseh, "for now that I know how well off you are I shall no longer feel I am doing a charity."



"'I HAVE A LOT O' MEALS GIVEN ME.'"

"Oh, yes, you vill," said Yankele insinuatingly. "You are too much a man of honour to know as a private philanthropist vat I have told de marriage-broker, de fader-in-law and de fellow *Schnorrer*. Besides, I vould have de free meals from you as de son-in-law, not de *Schnorrer*."

"In that relation I should also have free meals from you," rejoined Manasseh.

"I never dared to tink you vould do me de honour. But

even so I can never give you such good meals as you give me. So dere is still a balance in my favour."

"That is true," said da Costa thoughtfully. "But you have still about a guinea to make up."

Yankele was driven into a corner at last. But he flashed back, without perceptible pause, "You do not allow for vat I make by my piety. I fast twenty times a year, and surely dat is at least equivalent to a guinea per annum."

"But you will have children," retorted da Costa.

Yankele shrugged his shoulders.

"Dat is de affair of de Holy One, blessed be He. Ven He sends dem He vill provide for dem. You must not forget, too, dat mid *your* daughter de dowry vould be noting so small as a hundred pounds."

"My daughter will have a dowry befitting her station, certainly," said Manasseh, with his grandest manner; "but then I had looked forward to her marrying a king of *Schnorrers*."

"Vell, but ven I marry her I shall be."

"How so?"

"I shall have *schnorred* your daughter—the most precious thing in the world! And *schnorred* her from a king of *Schnorrers*, too! And I shall have *schnorred* your services as marriage-broker into de bargain."

(To be continued.)

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

"OUIDA"

"Moths."

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD

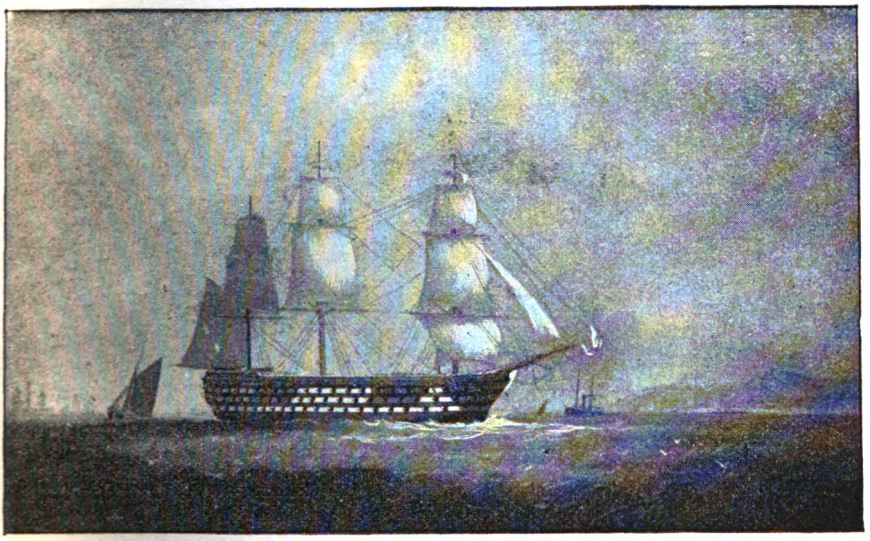
Lions in their Dens.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD.

By Raymond Blathwayt.

(Photographs by Cameron & Smith, C. Merlin, and J. David.)

AS I stepped on board H.M.S. *Undaunted* the bugle rang out clear and true, and there was a rush of men tumbling to quarters. "Do you hear what it says?" Lord Charles Beresford said to me—"'Undaunteds be ready; Undaunteds be steady, Undaunteds stand by for a job.' That's been our motto throughout



H.M.S. 'MARLBOROUGH," IN WHICH LORD CHARLES BERESFORD SERVED AS MIDSHIPMAN.

the Commission, and the men have acted splendidly up to it too. Here you see me at home! Dear old ship, I'm really very, very sorry to leave her, but I leave her in perfect condition as a British man-of-war should be." And as I glanced down the shining deck, and noted the brasswork glittering in the sun, the long lines of perspective, the great guns sweeping the range fore and aft, the men smart and alert, and everything trim and ship-shape, I very cordially agreed with my host, who had just come to an anchor in Plymouth Sound after his three-and-a-half years' cruise

under the commands of Sir A. Hoskins and the late Sir George Tryon with the Mediterranean Fleet.

A strong, broad-shouldered, very deep-chested, well-set-up man, clean shaven, laughing blue eyes, a charming manner—such, in a word, is this typical sailor, Lord Charles Beresford. And a man, too, as all such are, of a very strong individuality, a many-sided man, a man with an infinity of character hidden beneath the genial, easy-going manner, and the frank and racy outspokenness of him.

You cannot talk five minutes with "Charlie Beresford," as he is affectionately known throughout the length and breadth of

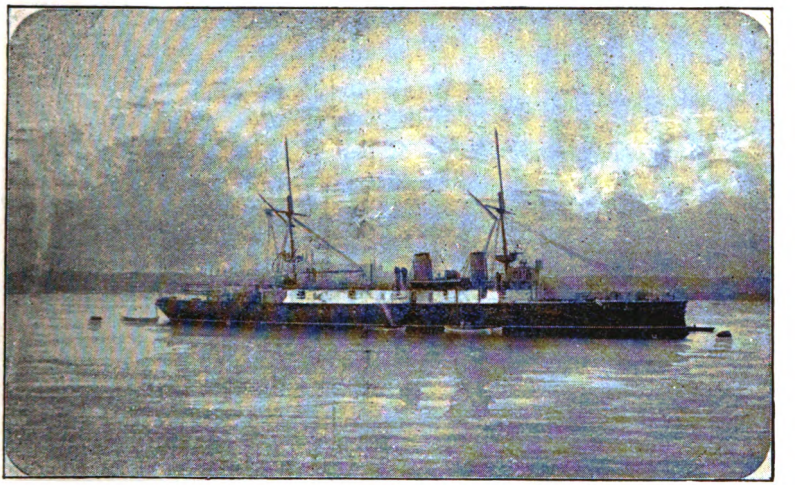
OFFICERS OF H.M.S. "UNDAUNTED," ALEXANDRIA, 1893

the land—for he is almost as popular on shore as he is on board his ship—without the realisation coming upon you that you are talking to a very remarkable man. And so, indeed, you are. For a braver, a more capable, a more distinguished man in his own special line, it would be hard to meet.

A man who, despite temptations to a life of ease and pleasure, has nevertheless won his way by sheer hard work, indomitable energy and endless perseverance, to a very prominent position in the service to which he is so devoted, and a very unique position in the kingdom.

I gathered in a moment the kind of officer he was, when, as a group of sturdy tars swung by us, he said, "There, some of

those fellows came to me from the *Valorous*. They were not altogether good characters, but I had 'em up before me, and just told them that we started with a clean record together, and that they weren't to spoil it, and now, although there are as good, you would not beat those fellows for work and good conduct in any ship in the service. It's a great thing in an officer," he went on, "to know how to deal with men—he must be a judge of human nature really to be successful. Naval officers generally are rare judges of character. You see they begin to learn to administrate from boys, almost children, when they have charge of a 'cutter's crew' of twelve men. We often have men up



H.M.S. "UNDAUNTED," ALEXANDRIA, 1893.

before us, and nothing but 'Next time I'll court-martial you' would have any effect with them, while to others 'You shall have one more chance' would have more weight than anything else." A great big marine, the foremost man in the tug-of-war, which is depicted in an accompanying photograph, at this moment passed us, and Lord Charles drew my attention to his splendid physique. "There," said he, "that man's one of our tug-of-war. Our teams have never been beaten during the Commission. You may imagine how proud we were. At the last regatta, in November, 1892 (Mediterranean Fleet), we entered in twenty-five races, and won twenty-two prizes—twelve first, seven seconds, and three thirds.

"I took the greatest personal trouble in having the men properly trained, paying great attention to details, details which should be carried out slowly, deliberately, quietly, and perfectly before a crew begins to get into hard training. It is paying attention to the most minute particulars, which must be carefully combined, that can alone produce a thoroughly trained boat's crew. Who is it that says, speaking generally of the value of trifles, '*The little more, and how much it is! The little less, and what worlds away!*' Well, I think that is more true with regard to athletics than with almost anything I know. I attach the greatest possible importance to these athletic competitions, and I'll tell you why. I am convinced that they do good to the men as individuals and in the mass. They generate activity of mind, as well as activity of body. They produce that courage, endurance, nerve, and national muscle which have so long been the distinctive features of the British race. They provoke a spirit of manliness, a generosity of mind, and a love of fair play; for I have noticed time and again that, if conditions have been made out fairly and clearly, a beaten crew invariably accepts the verdict in a gallant and chivalrous manner. And not only are these things to be considered, but it must be borne in mind that the training and practice which are necessary to put the boat's crews of men-of-war into that state of condition for winning must, to a large extent, cultivate those habits of discipline which are so essential for the efficiency of our great service, on which practically the existence of the whole British Empire depends. You'll think me a wild enthusiast, perhaps," he went on with a ringing laugh, "but it s only plain common-sense after all."

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD
ON FIRST ENTERING PARLIAMENT IN 1875

As he took me over his beautiful ship, and I noted the friendly easy manner in which he speaks to the sailors (it in no way interferes with that respect which strict discipline engenders), everyone of whom regards him as a personal friend, every-

one of whom would follow him to the forlornest hope that ever was, or listened to him as he exchanged a laughing remark with some brother officer or bright little middy, I realised somewhat of the character that goes to the making of the most popular man in the British Navy, and I recalled some of the stories that are told of him. Here is one of them which the sight of the middy's sleeping quarters suggested to me. On one of his first ships, it may have been that very *Marlborough* of which so good a sketch is presented to the reader's view, and on which he learned most of his seamanship—for, said he to me, "those old sailing ships are invaluable for teaching a youngster all he ought to know"—there was a great burly ship's corporal, a fair boxer, whose duty it was to wake the middies in the morning. One day it so chanced that he couldn't arouse Lord Charles. "Come on, sir, "said he, "or I'll make you." "Now, look here," sleepily retorted the boy, "you're a pretty big fellow, and a good boxer, and so you think you're cock of the ship. Now you say nothing about it, and I won't, and we'll go on deck and settle this thing at once." And so in the early morning half-light, before anyone was stirring and only the sentry to see fair play, these two—the great iron-fisted fellow in the hey-day of his lusty manhood, and the slight, delicately-nurtured youth — met one another face to face. It was a magnificent set-to, but both were battered and bruised before the officer of the watch had them separated. It is just the story one would expect to hear of a man who has three times won for himself the Humane Society's medal for saving life at sea. Wasn't it "Charlie Beresford" who jumped overboard in a heavy shooting suit, with his pockets full of cartridges, to rescue a poor sailor who had fallen into the seas that gird the sterile ice-bound shores of the Falkland Isles? He is always to the fore where good work has to be done, always ready to help a friend, with ever a cheering word to those who are appointed to carry out his orders. There is another story which a naval officer who had witnessed the occurrence once told me. Many years ago, when Lord Charles first joined the service, he and a young middy were seized with a desire to steal the flag which flew over the residence of an American Consul in a certain port. "Next day there

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD AS AN "A B.

was, of course, a fearful row," said my friend, "and the flag being discovered in Beresford's cabin, he was sent for by the captain and commanded to replace it. He actually refused to do so. Things looked very black indeed for him, when someone was inspired with the happy idea of telegraphing to his mother, to whom he was, and is, devoted. Lady Waterford, in great anxiety, wired back, 'Do this for my sake.' It was like magic. Beresford and his companion then made a great parade of it. 'If the thing is to be done at all, we'll do it well,' said he. There was quite a public ceremony on the ground. With a photographer to immortalise them, he and the other fellow climbed to the top of the consular flagstaff, and the stars and stripes once more fluttered in the breeze." But all this time Lord Charles has been taking me over the *Undaunted*, his

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD'S CABIN.

A CORNER OF THE CABIN.

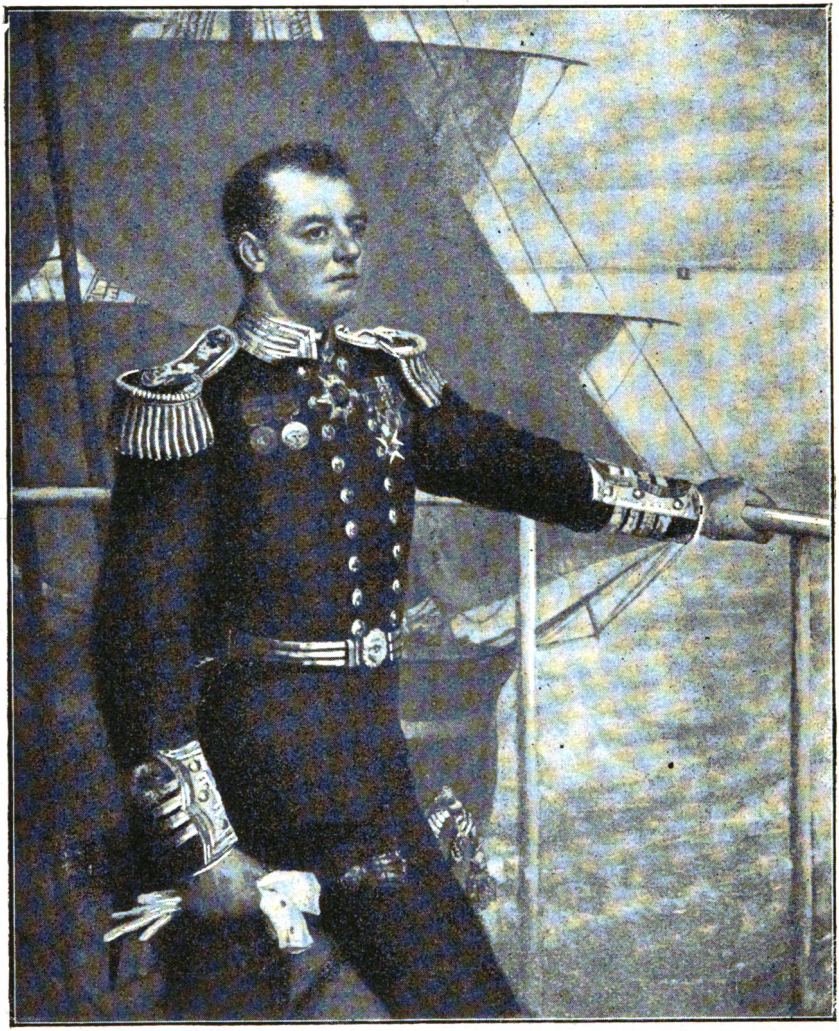
favourite bull-dog Alec slowly swinging along behind us. He has an eye for everything, nothing escapes him. He has personally done everything in a man-of-war that he might call upon any of his officers and men to do, including "stoking" and "chipping a boiler." Lord Clanwilliam, then Lord Gillford, put him in the sailmaker's crew in the *Tribune*. Lord Clanwilliam was delighted with the work. He could sew a seam, rope a sail, and cut out and make a jumper and a pair of trousers against any sailmaker before he left the Pacific Station. He taught all his "mids" in the *Undaunted* how to do these things, and always insisted on their wearing a canvas working-suit when working in the engine room, driving a steam-boat, or for general work on seamanship days. The "mids" had to do everything with their overhauls, and work in suits made by themselves.

RETURNING THE AMERICAN FLAG.

It was in his "little place" in Richmond Park that I saw him next. There, upon a brilliant burning summer day, I found him with his family at home once more. Lady Charles Beresford and her two little girls, the elder of whom spends the winter with her mother in Egypt, the younger one, a veritable chip of the old block, full of fun and charming little childish contrarieties. It was here that he told me something of the stirring days through which he has passed, and to which, despite the fact that he laid but little emphasis upon his share in those eventful scenes, I must yet give more than a passing reference.

Wellington, long ere his death, must have wearied of that saying which is attributed to him at Waterloo, "Up, guards, and at 'em!" Nelson, had he lived, would, I am sure, have been heartily sick of his celebrated exhortation to the fleet to do its duty, and equally, I suspect, Lord Charles is extremely tired of the frequent repetition of that signal which flashed through the fleet at the end of that hot

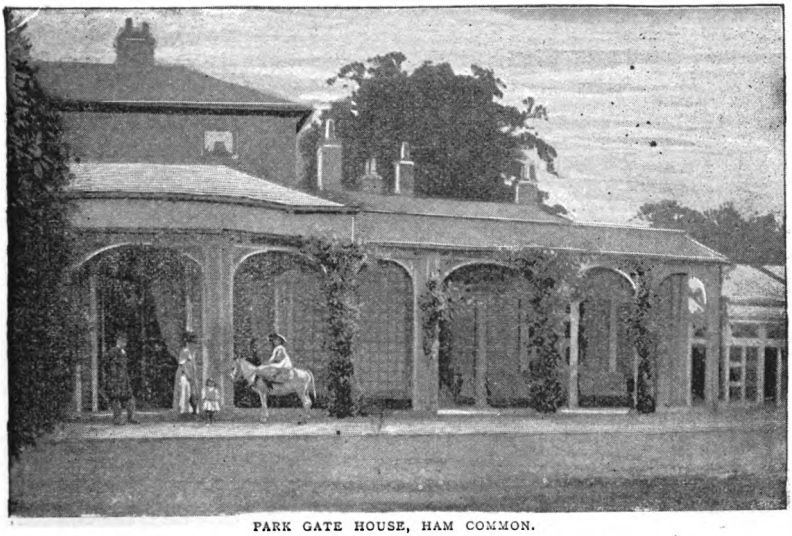
and noisy day before Alexandria, "Well done, *Condor*." But, indeed, though he made so little of it, it was well done. "Well, you see," said he, as he lay back in the shade of the beautiful



LORD CHARLES BERESFORD. (From the painting by EDWIN LONG.)

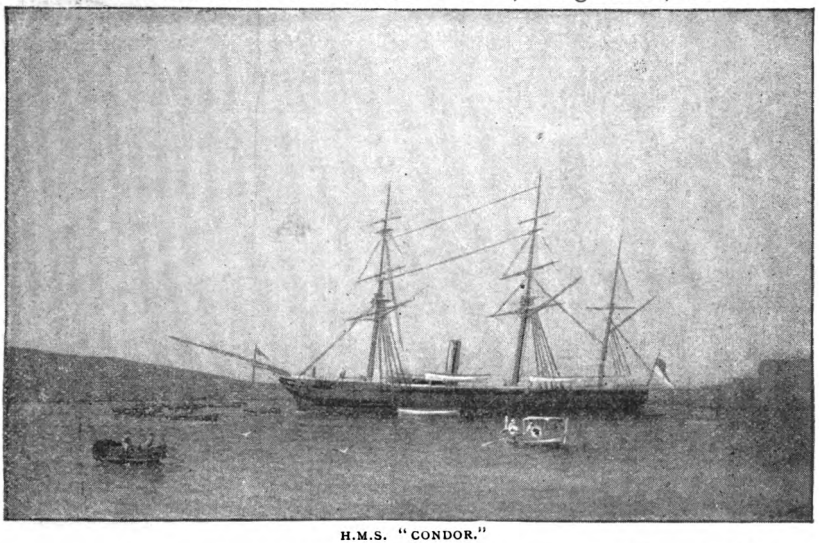
Arabic tent, which stood upon the lawn—"Well, you see, our Commander-in-Chief in his orders said that the small craft were to be repeating ships, and were to make themselves as useful as opportunity occurred.

"The *Temeraire* got aground on the northern part of the Borghos Pass, so we went down and towed her off. Whilst doing



PARK GATE HOUSE, HAM COMMON.

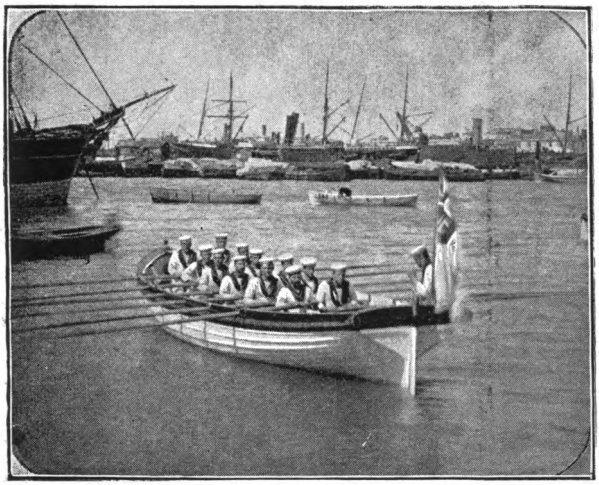
so the Marabut fort opened fire on the English ships inside the bar. The idea struck me that the *Condor*, being small, with low



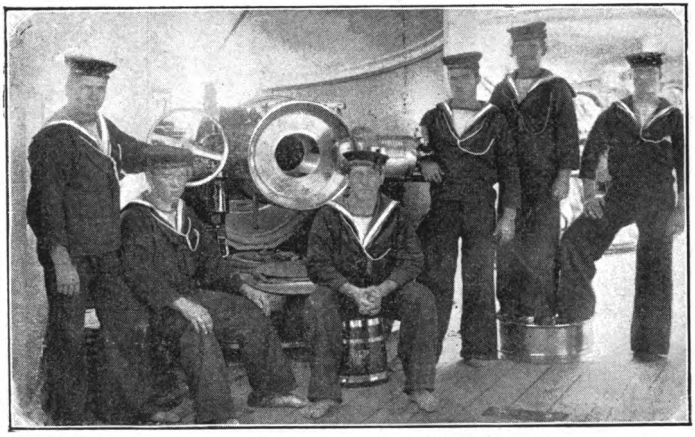
H.M.S. "CONDOR."

freeboard, might get through the zone of fire and under the fort. It wasn't altogether easy work, for had one shell

struck the *Condor* fair and square we should have been sunk to a dead certainty. However, she was easy to handle, and, when once we were on the angle of the fort and under it, we were all right. My dodge was to throw a couple of missiles into a fort at a time, and then back or fill, as the case might be, so that just when the Egyptians thought they had got our right range, the *Condor* was out of the way, and so it went on pretty well all day. The men behaved splendidly—upon my word, I don't think they have their equals," he cried enthusiastically. "Only the other day a foreign



GIG OF THE "UNDAUNTED."



"A.B.'S" OF THE "UNDAUNTED."

Admiral—as fine a fellow as I know—told me that, with such men as we Britishers had, he could defy the world. 'My chaps,'

he said, 'whenever it comes on to blow, kneel down and say their prayers.' Yes, you can't get any one to beat the English blue-jacket and marine."

"And what about the Nile expedition, Lord Charles?" said I.

"Ah!" he replied, "the honours of war ought to have gone to that engineer, Benbow, who repaired a boiler in less than ten hours

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD AND GENERAL WOLSELEY IN THE SOUDAN.

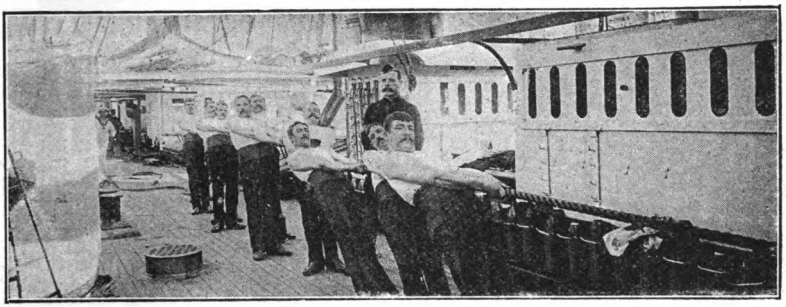
that was shot through, under a tremendously heavy fire from the shore. Isn't it curious," he went on in a musing kind of way, "how *the* man who really does the work is often unrecognised and unrewarded, while someone else who steps in at the last moment is the one to get all the credit and all the prizes too. What a splendid bit of work that was of Benbow's—that man, to my mind, is a real

hero. Knowing now what I have since learnt through Father Orwalder and others, I shall always regret not recommending Benbow to my chief for the 'V.C.' A man often gets a 'V.C.' for saving another man's life, and rightly too, but there are cases of a man saving a large number of lives, for which gallant act he is often not recognised. Benbow's is one of those cases. If Benbow had not put that patch on the boiler, under countless difficulties and dangers, under a hot and continued fire, we must have been lost. Wilson's party must have been lost, and, as has since transpired through Father Orwalder and many Sheikhs from the Soudan (who were then fugitives in the Mahdi's camp), the whole of the little column at Metemmeh would have been lost

'UNDAUNTEDS' ASHORE.

too, as the action at Wad-el-Habashi delayed the arrival of Nejunn and his army of 40,000 men. It was entirely owing to his pluck, and that of my crew, that we were enabled to bring back Sir Charles Wilson's force, which had been forced to land owing to their steamer grounding on a narrow neck of land, where they were exposed to heavy fire, which they couldn't return all day long. A queer thing, too," he added, "that in a thing of that kind, just when everything seems up with you, and you feel you're in a devil of a tight place, it's the scally-wags, the worst fellows in the ship, who come out the best. I'd sooner have the boy who robbed the orchard with me if I got into a row than the fellow who was always first at Sunday school."

Whilst Lord Charles and the little girls were grouping themselves for a photo, Lady Charles told me something of her husband's official life, and the earnestness with which he had deliberately and consistently set himself to do away with the evil effects of red-tape and unbendable officialism. "It is curious how successful he is as a public speaker, Lady Charles," said I—"you don't often find men of action so ready on the platform as your husband." "No," she replied, "perhaps not, but I don't think his success is due to either his eloquence or his learning; he does not profess to have much of either, but he is very earnest, and he has a thorough knowledge of his facts, and he always gives *reasons* for what he says, as he declares he's got his trade at his fingers' ends, and so I suppose he can always say something about it. If you come into the house



"UNDAUNTEDS' "TUG-OF WAR."

I'll show you how thoroughly he has studied, not only our own fleet, but all the other fleets in the world," and as she spoke Lady Charles led the way into their beautiful little house. And then she placed before me enormous frames, each one of which contained most exquisitely prepared details, not only of every fleet, but even of each battleship, coast defence vessels, cruisers in their classes, torpedo boats, and the fast vessels of the mercantile marine required as scouts, uhlans, coal ships, etc., of the principal navies of Europe. So that at a glance it can be seen where any battleship, or gunboat, or torpedo, or cruiser is lying, or what her gun or coal capacity, or her tonnage may be. It was a wonderful revelation of one side of the character of a man whom so many have supposed in the past to be a mere harum-scarum, sky-larking sailor! For my own part, I know

of few men who have so thoroughly mastered their profession, or made themselves so completely conversant with the intricate details of a singularly complicated calling. He has the navy and its wants at his fingers' ends. "You know," said he to me a few hours later, as we sat discussing the prospects of the navy after luncheon— "you know that we cannot pay too much attention to every single detail, for it is in those details that everything will hang in time of war, and which, if war breaks out suddenly, we will not be able to attend to. Who knows, or cares, about our coaling stations, or the quantity of ammunition that we have stored in foreign stations, and on which so much would depend if war breaks out. I tell you this, we should lose far more on a sudden outbreak of war by want of organisation of the forces we at present possess, and by the want of business-like forethought, than we should by our possible numerical inferiority to the enemy. I gladly own that there is a wonderful improvement in naval matters generally since I left England, but there is still much to be done. What I want to see become an established fact is what I may term a council of defence with a president at its head who shall be either a soldier or a sailor, or even a civilian, and who shall be in the position, together with his board, of adviser to the Government. An expert, in short, who will know exactly

LADY CHARLES BERESFORD.

what is required, and who will be able to advise accordingly. At present, you know, there is no organisation, and, as a consequence, there is an absolute want of system and a lack of communication between the services at the naval bases of operations. The Naval Authorities and the Artillery never consult one another, whilst the Royal Engineers go to work with never a 'with your leave' or 'by your leave.' Things are all haphazard, and if war broke out now, I can tell you, we'd precious soon be in Queer Street, and a very queer street it would be too. The money that Parliament grants us is almost sufficient, if only it were properly allocated, but so long as there are no friendly consultations between the services, and the Engineers continue to build forts which the Artillery are to use for the defence of the Navy they are intended to protect, and no preliminary consultations take place, what can you expect in time of war but disaster? But things are mending. Our Intelligence Department is doing wonders already. Our mobilisation is very good, and the manœuvres are working great changes in the whole aspect of affairs. Give us a man who knows how to organise so as to enable other men to fight—a naval Moltke, in short—and we shall be ready to face the world."

LITTLE MISS BERESFORD.

MISS BERESFORD

"And will the country back the navy up?" I queried. The answer was a curious, a characteristic, and an unexpected one.

"Yes, certainly. Unquestionably the great heart of the country will—that is, the commercial classes and the educated working men. These are the people that really rule the country, and the people I should trust in to do anything really patriotic for

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD.

the country. I do not mean to say that those who *were* called the upper classes would not work for the country too, if they had the power, but most of them are gone, or their power has disappeared

owing to their industry—the agricultural industry—having failed. Their place is usurped by a plutocracy, who can go anywhere, do anything, entertain any high personage, present them with gifts—and this no matter who the donor is, what his previous employment or occupation has been, or of what nationality he may be, so long as he can pay. Was it not Carlyle who said, 'England has been governed by aristocracy, plutocracy, strumpetocracy, and now she bids fair to become governed by mobocracy, but the worst of all these is plutocracy'—or words to this effect? I have no faith whatever in either of the 'ends' of Society. Now there is the mob at one end and the plutocrat at the other. Neither of them care one jot about the country from a patriotic point of view, and neither of them are the people whom thinking men will even *consider* should the country be in danger."

The Dapper Little Gentleman.

By M. Babington Bayley.

Illustrations by Scott Rankin.

A DAPPER little gentleman.
with well-pomaded hair,
Was loved and woo'd by maidens
twain,
and both of them were fair.
A smiling blonde was one,
correctly tall, with eyes of blue;
The other was petite and
dark,
just like a parley-voo.

They loved the little gentleman
with love extremely strong;
They wrote him scented letters,
and expressed their love in song;
They worked him carpet-slippers,
sent him presents by the score;
And dreamed of him, and daily grew to love him more and more.

The dapper little gentleman,
with well-pomaded hair,
Accepted their devotion
with an unembarrassed air;
Although, to be exact, his state
of mind was far from clear—
To save his life he couldn't tell
which one he held more dear.

"Blonde or brunette?" he'd ask himself.
"Now which do I prefer?
My secret inclination I'll attempt to disinter.
Blonde or brunette?—Brunette or blonde?—
Upon my honour, I
Am puzzled by the question; still to answer
it I'll try.

"For if of the brunette I am particularly fond,
It's clearly wrong to smile on the attentions of the blonde,
And if I love the blonde, it is a breach of etiquette
To wear the carpet-slippers of the
lovely young brunette."

Alas! the more he mused the more unsettled
he became,
His preference he found himself incompetent
to name;
And so at length he spun a coin to settle
which to wed—
"If head comes down, I'll have the blonde."
The penny came down head.

Repentance overtook
him in his altered
state of life—
For, ah! the smiling
blonde turned out a
devil of a wife!
She ceased her kind
attentions soon as ever
they were wed,
And showered opprobrious
adjectives on his
pomaded head.

She served him like a servant, and she chid him like a child;
She lashed him with sarcastic tongue until she drove him wild;
At dinner she her sovereignty with solemn awe impressed,
And wouldn't let him speak unless he chanced to be addressed.

She robbed him of his
latch-key and his
much-belovéd pipe;
She wouldn't let him
hunt, or fish, or
bag a brace of snipe;
She paled with horror
at the thought
of alcoholic drink,
And read him curtain-
lectures till he
couldn't sleep a wink.

With eyes severe she told him,
every evening of their life,
How *very* fortunate he was
in having such a wife!
Until his sad repentance
found expression in a wail:
"Oh! if that curséd penny-piece
had only come down tail!"

The Man-Eater.

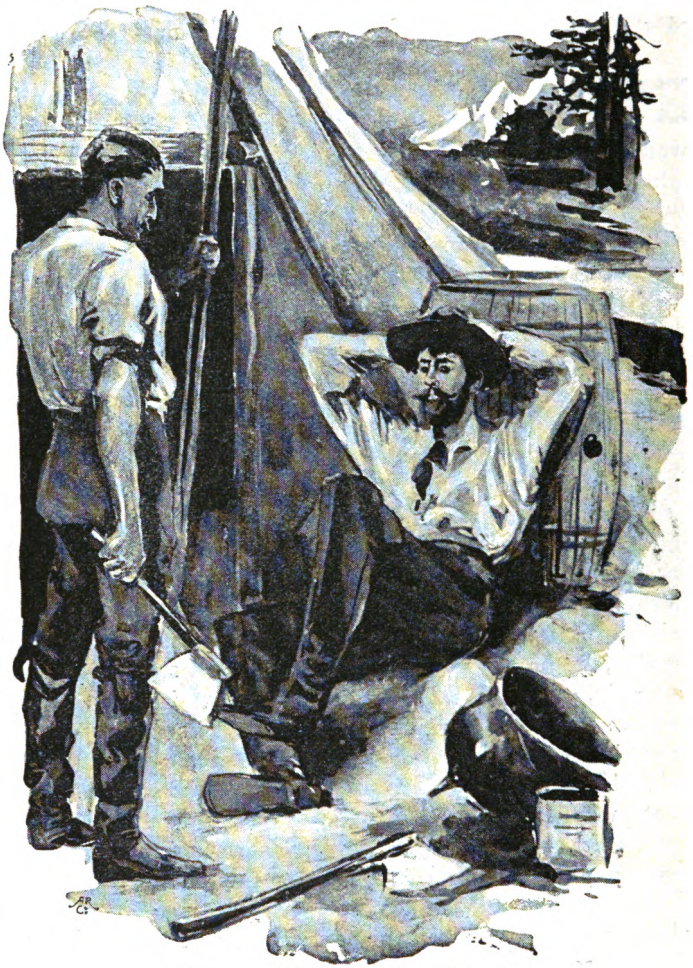
By Morley Roberts. Illustrations by Hal Hurst.

WHEN Bill Yates and his partner Tom Bouthroyd went prospecting on the eastern slope of the terrible Selkirk Range, it was about the end of August, and the skies were as pure and bright as the waters of the Beaver Creek, by which they camped high up in the mountains. At night it certainly sometimes smelt keen to a man when he put his sleepy head outside the blankets and dragged the hemlock branches under his hips to soften the hard ground, but in the daytime both sun and bright air were as soft and sweet as the smell of the feathery hemlock itself.

But when it came on late September, at their lofty silver-hunting altitude, the fine needles of the scarred and weathered rocks, five thousand feet above them, broke daily into the sudden sun with snow silver, polished and far-shining. Winter, the alchemist, was arming the peaks till they gleamed like spears. On the south aspect the sun at noon still burnt hotly, and under it the night snow dropped off, slid thinly valleywards, washing the steep rock slides under the arched mouths of glaciers, dipping deep in rubbish, filled crevices to burst out lower down in mid-day springs, to make turbid the creeks that ran to the western bend of the Columbia, but on the north side the night glory remained, growing perpetually, crawling east and west till at last it met and defied the sinking southern sun. Then, said the miners, it was about time to shift camp, to vamoose, to quit, to get up and get, and both Bill and Tom thought about it. But a warm, balmy, Chinook wind from the Pacific came over the mountain-barrier to the sun's aid, and attacked the strong snow insinuatingly, just as passion may undermine a man, strong though he be, and make him as water, and this Chinook deluded the men. They stayed too long, and, at last, when they did get where the Beaver ran less violently, because its solid locked-up strength was being stored overhead for flood-time, the snow came in a blinding storm that caught them on the hip and fixed them coldly.

This same snow is a deceitful devil of a thing, beautiful and accursed. Not often does it come so in this tame England, but in British Columbia, in the sea of mountains, about the high peaks

of the north-western world, on the very Selkirks it falls greatly, though often slowly at first, like an insidious disease that on a sudden takes a man's strength away at an expected crisis. It is almost ophidian and treacherous; it lies in wait by night. Yet it



"IT WAS ABOUT TIME TO SHIFT CAMP."

is a yielding enemy. A man may attack it, and it gives, but there is always more in front, until he yields. And there is more above in the full grey skies, and nothing stays it. A hot cedar fire melts a black muddy circle on the ground, and the roaring leap of

red and blue flame dissolves the falling flakes, but a forest fire itself cannot melt out a path in the endless, blind wilderness of it. Those who are circumvented by its most infernal patience and subtlety must grin and endure and hope for the bitter best, learn to live until it melts and freezes and cakes, and they can overpass the deep treachery that lies below.

So Bill Yates and Tom Bouthroyd sat down to endure. But they didn't grin once in a white week, for they were both sombre and solemn men. With their shovels they marked out a circle in a sheltered spot, and heaped up firewood. About them walls rose, at the bottom close packed, and at the height fine and impalpable as gold dust. They sat and waited.

Of the two beleaguered ones, Tom was the bigger and stronger, looking the most likely in the brutal course of natural selection to come out on the top of the pile and mutter a requiem over Bill. But that is where the deceitfulness of looks came in; even if he was older and smaller and less powerful, Bill was sound as a young fir, there wasn't a rotten spot or wind-shake in him. His partner, on the other hand, had led a wild life in many wild towns. His principal occupation in them was, metaphorically, the brilliant use of a red paint that damaged his constitution and touched his inner life and broke him up. So, being without the staying power of the older man, the mountain cold bit into him and froze his blood till he grew afraid, and his right heart was paralysed with the numbness of terror, and his breathing became strangely laboured. It made Bill feel queer to look at him in that damnable solitude of ghastly whiteness, and see it gradually grow on the grey face of his partner as well as on their whole earth. And then——

"The grub's running out," said Bill. He saw Tom weaken at the news.

"How much more?" the sick man asked.

"About two meals," answered Bill, and that night he ate nothing, saying that he wasn't hungry. He was still strong enough to hope, even in the darkened loneliness of night.

But in the morning, the next bitter morning, Tom's face, outside his blankets, was not warm enough to melt the settling snow. Bill sat shaking at the sight. The desolation was now so complete, so awful and supreme. The terror of the eternal voiceless, windless, solitude of forest and quiet mountain was deepened and intensified by the crying terror of present visible death.

"How much more?" Tom had asked. A few hours only—a

very few hours. For he had died weakly at midnight with the grey horror crawling upon him, dropping flakes on him, burying him as he lay. It was like being wrapped in cold grave-clothes while still alive, while he could yet see dimly, while there was still a faint possible hope in the far lower valley. He tried to call Bill, but died voiceless, sighing.

That day was even more bitterly cold, so Bill, fighting against fate, dug deep into the deepening snow-bank and made a little den, such as a snowed-up beast might make, and the inside got yellow with his breath. It melted, and then froze. For himself he made a little entrance that he blocked with a big ball of snow. For Tom he dug a narrower house, without an entrance. He found it easy working, for the white devil's dust was dry as dry flour: it never melted on his hands. A man would keep there till snow melting, till the thin winter creeks roared turbidly for the great Columbia, which now ran blue as the blue sky, whose yellow sun coloured all things, but never stirred a flake from the southward spruces.

"HE TRIED TO CALL BILL."

It was very odd that Bill buried Tom so deeply. With his shovel he dug to the ground, then rigid as rock, and afterwards piled the snow on him, beating it down with the flat of the shovel, and then throwing more on till a big mound arose beside his fire-kept hollow. Then he went back to his den and ate half what he had, a little bad bacon and a piece of Johnny cake. Having Tom's

blankets now, as well as his own, he slept warmly that night, and he steadfastly refused to get up in the morning. He lay in his den coiled up the whole of the next day as well, and by tightening up his slack belt, and making no demands on his strength, he lasted

"PILED THE SNOW ON HIM."

through that long twenty-four hours without great pain. Next day he ate a mouthful. But that single bite was half he had. The day after he starved again. Then he ate his last morsel, and now he had not even a leaf of tobacco to lull his tortured nerves, which began to play strange tricks with him. Pains came first in one

place and then suddenly in another. As his strength gave way every old injury came up to his mind; he had sudden thoughts of old blows aching again in his weakening limbs. For he was failing now, and failing fast.

But still he would not give in; no, not even when his dreams became more or less delirious and he woke up talking, or went on emptily dreaming of eating, eating, eating, without any satisfaction. As he lay awake he greedily remembered the very look of the table down at Donald; he savoured the meanest dish ever served up in a cattle camp; a visionary mess of greasy beans and rancid pork made his sleep delightful and his hungry awakening an anguish.

Then, of course, his guarded thoughts began to run in one channel, even against his natural will. As melting snow courses here and there in tiny rivulets over the yielding and sinking surface, and at last chooses its main path, cutting deeper, so his many fancies came together in a ghastly imagination that he fought against, but which tore him in pieces, making the painful day and night ugly and abhorrent. He hated the part of his brain that gave cover to the beastly suggestion, but the power of it grew, even as the conquest of the snow had done, and as that had covered odorous shrub and green bush, and hidden the newer variety of the mountain slopes, so this smoothed over his natural self that was of latest human growth, leaving at last little but the barren, bare projections of his ancient instincts. He was hungry —hungry; that was all he knew. It even hid death itself, and his body cried out. But even yet it shrank and quivered and quailed and could not. He lay, white and wan, red-spotted in the sunken cheeks, fevered, lip-cracked, mind-divided.

He dreamt that night of digging.

Perhaps if it had but now snowed more heavily, if the fiercer cold of the high peaks had descended into the valleys and his only shelter, if the barest possibility of escape had been taken away, he might have rolled himself in his blankets, and, by giving up hope of life, have yielded to death. He knew that freezing was not altogether painful, that towards the quiet end it lulls a man like opium, making his limbs heavy, but their heaviness restful, so, without hope, he might have chosen frost. But there was still a gleam of hope, for the winter had come so early; another Chinook might breathe in the snow and melt it, or melt it for freezing, so that he could snow-shoe it to the Columbia. And, indeed, the next morning there was a faint sign of some remission of the

intenser cold. He knew it, the dry snow melted in his hand. He fought hideous desire throughout half the night.

But when he fell asleep he dreamed of digging, digging, digging. In the pallid morning, even before he thrust away the ball of snow that blocked the entrance of the den where he was holed up, he was painfully aware of more snow and more cold. He had some difficulty in crawling out, for six inches had fallen in the night. And the cold that gripped him, as he emerged, was bitterer than ever. His fire was almost extinct, the snow had encroached almost to its heart, even as it had to Tom's.

"HE HAD SOME DIFFICULTY IN CRAWLING OUT."

But the sharp day was bright on the sparkling feathery crystals about him. To sunward up the slope it gleamed magically, the white, armed peaks were cold but tinged with fire, and yet they breathed chill upon his wasting frame and the black circle round his renascent fire. There was not a breath of air from east or west; the pendant spruce branches held bending burdens which a sigh would have made fall. There was, he knew, no hope of any change until the time when he would ask for none, when help of man or help of the seasons would be too late.

If he only had a little time—a very little time. He sat like a gaunt wolf, thinking of—time.

And now, even as the sound had deepened dreadfully about him, so more, much more, of his own soul was buried by necessity. He was beast again rather than the later man, and primeval instinct had him by the throat, squeezing assent out of him, and making reluctance yield utterly to horrible desire.

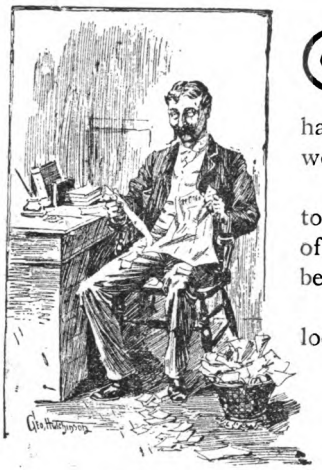
He took his spade and dug.

Cox's Blunder.

A Story of New York Journalism.

By Arthur Sperry.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.



"Cox sat down."

COX came into the office about half-past two. He should have been there at one o'clock, but it wouldn't have been Cox if he had been down to work on time.

"Good morning," he said ingratiatingly to Halfmann, the grey-whiskered Jupiter of the day city desk, as the coltish members of the *Morning Giraffe* called him.

"Good evening," snarled Halfmann, looking toward the clock.

Cox sat down at his desk, and picking up the copy of the morning's *Giraffe* that laid on it, he carefully tore it into long strings. These he tore across at intervals of an inch or so, and let the ragged squares flutter to the floor around him. Cox did this religiously every morning, because there was a notice on the wall to the effect that "Gentlemen are expected to read each morning's paper *through* before beginning work for the day."

"Cox took out a cigarette."

After he had finished his paper, Cox took out a cigarette and carefully picked the projecting shreds of tobacco from its ends. Halfmann called the office boy and told him to get Mr. Cox another copy of the paper. Things were reaching a critical point when the telephone bell rang. It was the "flimsy" bureau —a concern which supplied the various papers with routine news written on flimsy yellow manifold paper, and telephoned "tips" of big fires as soon as the alarms were rung—that had called, and it sent word that a crowded East Side tenement house was burning.

There would be loss of life amongst the children, the flimsy bureau said.

Most of the reporters had gone out on their early "assignments," and the fact that there was not a man in the office to whom he could entrust so important an affair with the exception of Cox, made Halfmann's always ruffled temper still worse. The necessity of giving the outlaw so profitable an assignment made him especially sarcastic.

"I am very sorry to trouble you, Mr. Cox," he said; "but I wish you would try and get me some kind of a story about a fire there is in a tenement house up in Rivington Street. Do you think you can do it?"

Cox stopped to light his cigarette, and after having carefully shaken himself into his overcoat he walked out. He boarded an Elevated Railroad train, and was at the scene of the fire in ten minutes. He was at a telephone ten minutes later talking to his city editor.

"THE SERGEANT IN CHARGE."

"I shall want eight columns for this story," he said, with an excellent assumption of breathless excitement, to which, however, Halfmann was proof. "Three children have been burned to death, several fatally injured by jumping from the windows, and about twenty women and children are missing."

"All right," answered the unmoved city editor, "I'll put it on the schedule for a column and a half. Have your 'copy' in by ten o'clock."

Cox went to the nearest saloon, where he found the reporters sent to the fire from the other newspaper offices, and they played penocle for the drinks for an hour or two. Then they went out and told the chief of the fire department that they wanted to use his carriage for awhile, and the chief told his driver to take them wherever they wanted to go. The six reporters crowded in and

were driven around to the police station. There they got from the sergeant in charge the names of the killed as reported by the police, the official estimate of the loss by the fire, and a list of the injured, with the names of the various hospitals to which they had been taken. Next they drove to the residence of Banker Keane, who owned the burned houses, and as he happened to be otherwise under the necessity of dining alone that evening, he asked them all to dine with him an hour later, when they could get a statement of the insurance, and some interesting details about the old houses.

The fire chief's driver took each of the "gang" to his lodgings, and then gathered them up again after they had time to get into their dress clothes, setting them down at the Keane house just as the banker's dinner was ready to be put on the table. It was a jolly "stagg" dinner party, and the banker told his guests a great many interesting stories about the old houses that had been burned.

"A CAT HAD TIPPED OVER THE OIL LAMP."

Dinner over, the reporters made a hurried round of the hospitals to which the injured had been taken, and got from the hospital physicians the stories of those who were old enough to relate their experiences, and also the names of the victims who had died after being taken to the hospitals.

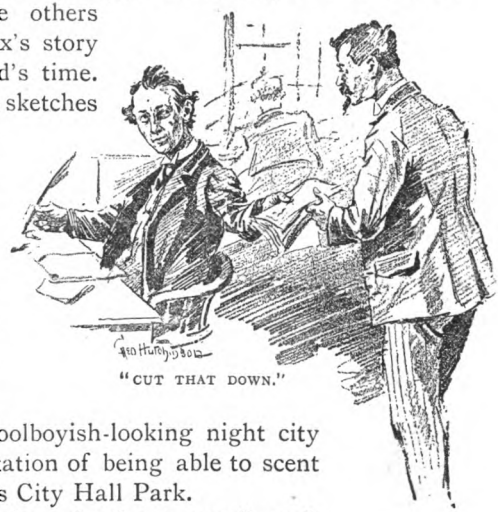
Cox got back to the *Giraffe* office about half-past nine o'clock, and found the three shorthand writers who had been told to help him all ready with their pencils sharpened at both ends.

"Baby Bocallininni got no milk," he began, as he took off his coat, spelling the name out so that the shorthand writer, who began taking notes at once, would get it right.

Then he went on to tell the story of the fire, explaining how a cat had tipped over the oil lamp on which Baby Bocallininni's six-year-old sister was warming milk for the infant, and set the house afire. As Cox talked he took drawing paper and India ink from his desk, and began to sketch the thrilling scenes of the fire, the firemen fighting the flames from their ladders, the great portable water-towers pouring their torrents into the blazing structure through the upper windows, and the children tumbling through the clouds of smoke to the life nets the firemen stretched in the street below. He sketched a group of the injured children in their

cots in the hospital, and a cat with its tail curled into a letter "B" for the initial letter of the striking line that began the article.

As he drew he rapidly dictated the account of the fire to the stenographers. When one of the stenographers was ready to stop and transcribe his notes on a typewriter, he gave vent to a low whistle, and one of the others began to take down Cox's story without his losing a word's time. As fast as Cox finished his sketches he sent them to the engraving room, where they were photo-engraved instantly. Fifteen minutes before eleven the pile of typewritten "copy," and the engraver's "proofs" of the "cuts," were lying on the desk before Black, the pale, schoolboyish-looking night city editor, who had the reputation of being able to scent an inaccuracy clear across City Hall Park.



"CUT THAT DOWN."

He glanced rapidly through the "copy," and, handing it to one of the "copy readers," said, "Cut that down to eighty inches of space and write a ten-inch scare head for it. Here are the headlines used in the evening papers. Don't use any words that are used in any of them."

Cox came into the office at half-past four the next day. His fire article had made nearly four and a-half columns—about forty dollars worth of space—and he did not see any necessity for working that day. Halfmann spoke to him pleasantly. This was unprecedented. There was no paper lying on his desk, and Cox felt uneasy as he noticed it. In all the sixteen months he had been a reporter on the *Giraffe* he had never missed the paper before. He found a letter in his letter-box. It read:

"Mr. Cox is informed, by direction of the managing editor, that his services are no longer required.

"Mr. Cox will be paid one month's salary, in addition to such space-rate earnings due to him, upon presenting this note to the cashier.

"Mr. Cox, in an article about a fire on Rivington Street, published in the *Giraffe* of this date, spelled the name of Mr. Heinrich Smyth—'Smith.'"

Memoirs of a Female Nihilist.

By Sophie Wassilieff.

Illustrations by J. St. M. Fitz-Gerald.

VI.—UNDER POLICE SURVEILLANCE.

I HAVE done the five years' exile to which I was condemned. Now behold me back again in European Russia.

Often, under pretext of different disciplinary punishments, the police have put off my return from year to year, thus prolonging the period of exile far beyond the term fixed by verdict of the tribunal or the ministerial decree. Sometimes the return is accomplished by *étapes*. The exile, having finished his term in Siberia, obtains permission to settle in some town in European Russia, the eastern part, then, after some years on trial, to come into the middle of the country.

Exiles who possess relations in the official world are sometimes permitted to pass these intermediate *étapes*, and to return direct to the most populated and civilised of the central or western provinces. This time, again, I was among the privileged few. Immediately the time of my exile ended, Uncle Paul, not being able to have me near him at St. Petersburg, where those who are recognised enemies of the Government are not tolerated, got me leave to settle in W——, a town in the south-west of Russia, and where his eldest son, my cousin George, lived with his family, so at least I should not be quite alone.

En route, some days' journey from my destination, having dismounted at an inn to rest and refresh myself after my long ride, I was, without warning, seized in the middle of the night and thrown into a dirty little prison, full of human beings stricken with typhus. I there passed nearly seven weeks in ignorance. Why was I arrested? No trial, no judge, no advocate.

One morning they came to conduct me to the governor's office, where I expected to find some representatives of the law, and to learn something of the cause of my detention. I found George, my eldest cousin, who at first did not recognise me, although we had grown up together. With him was my dear, good aunt Vera, also much changed, who, with a great sob of

joy, threw herself into my arms, and covered me with kisses, mingled with tears. Half an hour afterwards all three of us had

"SEIZED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT."

left the prison, with a formal order from the gendarmerie for me to quit the place immediately, and to continue my journey.

An event like this happening to a Russian subject is merely an incident, but in my case I could not grumble, as it brought about agreeable consequences, for, thanks to that, I was able to proceed in company with my relations.

My relatives knew of no reason for my arrest, nor did my advocate either. George formed a supposition about it—the

"FIXED HER GREAT BLUE EYES ON ME."

Imperial family were going to the Crimea, Livadia, where they often passed the autumn. Now it would save the police much trouble and worry in watching the suspects round about by putting them in the "shade," *i.e.*, imprisoning them, till the Imperial travellers were out of the district. The place where I was arrested was near the Imperial railway, and I may have been

simply included in this general precautionary measure; the order to quit as soon as they had passed comfirmed this idea.

A provincial chief town (W——) of about sixty thousand inhabitants, with regular groups of houses, mostly of one storey high, and surrounded by gardens, some larger buildings, several churches, each with its five round domes painted green, the Governor's House, and the Palais de Justice—picture this town, surrounded by the immense steppes, fresh and green from the recent rains. Such is W——.

My cousin's sister-in-law was a young and elegant woman whom I had never seen till now, and who fixed her great blue eyes on me with a scared expression of curiosity as though I had been a spectre. At her house were held the reunions of the better educated and more polished members of the society at W——.

The first days of my sojourn at W—— were passed in going through all the different police formalities. Some hours after my arrival, accompanied by George, I went to the chief bureau to give up my passport, *passe-port de loup* (wolf's passport) as they call it in Russia—that is to say, one mentioning that you are a *libéré* returning from Siberia, condemned for political offences, and actually under the official surveillance of the police.

The officer, who received us very politely (thanks to George), told me, according to the regulations to which suspects have to submit, I must come every week to the bureau, and give an account of myself, my acts and manner of living, and, moreover, say how I had spent the past seven days in the town. The same rules extend to the "supervised" the right of engaging in any employment whatever, not only governmental, but such professions as medicine, teaching, and office work, but forbid frequenting of public places such as schools and libraries, and going beyond the limits of the town on any pretence.

All these rules, which I knew very well, as they were the same as the exiles in Siberia were under, have two aims—one, to render the surveillance easy to the police of those who are officially recognised to have evil designs against the Government; the other object being to make it impossible for the malcontents to disseminate their subversive ideas. To these means, officially furnished by the rules, the police add a third, viz., the threat of accusation in their turn of those who have any connection with the suspects.

This last plan drove away George's and my sister-in-law's friends. Frightened, no doubt, by my arrival, they abstained from

visiting us for two or three weeks, then, wearied of the monotony of country life, or perhaps out of curiosity, they came again in numbers, counting, if need be, to explain their acquaintance with me by their former friendship with George and his wife. It was slow work to bring about such a state of friendliness, for George being a magistrate, many of those who frequented his house were also persons connected with the law ; my position as one classed among the enemies of the Government as opposed to those who were its defenders was certainly embarrassing to me. Soon, however, this embarrassment wore off. In my character of suspect I had nothing to pretend, nothing to conceal, and when the conversation touched by chance upon Government affairs, I used the privilege of my unique position, and gave my opinion openly. This freedom, not often met with in Russia, seemed to interest and attract my interlocutors, all the more as my life, since I had been among them, guaranteed that I was neither an enemy in ambush, nor a garrulous creature likely to compromise them by imprudent talk. And if there were in this attraction a certain amount of conscious dignity, there was also some bitterness and discontent, usually hidden, but breaking out when least expected. The judicial reforms by the Government during the reign of Alexander II. having filled our courts and tribunals with people all having a university education, the same Alexander II. and his successor soon found these people too intelligent, too educated, and, above all, suspects. As a violent reform and return to the old *régime* appeared dangerous, the higher officials preferred to leave intact the new laws and proceedings. Little by little, they took away from those in office their rights and privileges, giving them to others more to be trusted.

"COUSIN GEORGE."

However unenviable my situation may have been at this time, it was not wholly disagreeable, as among George's friends there were a good many not connected with the Government, and who had grievances of their own against the "machine." For instance,

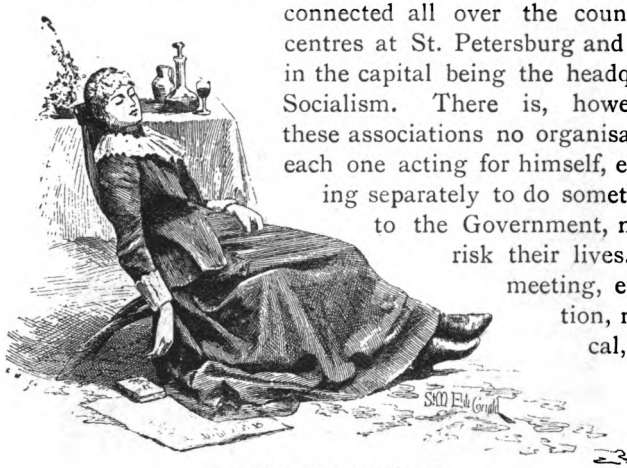
there were one or two writers and publishers limited to what they might write and publish, and what they might not, under penalty of an absurd and annoying censure and secret police watching; several members of the provincial chief towns, having charge of land, who found themselves more and more being brought under the thumb of the local government representatives; also some in the scholastic profession, with whom was played almost the same game as with the magistracy, only not so neatly, much more irritatingly and brutally, with worse threats and sorer vexations, and always that eternal "suspicion" hanging over them. And why? Simply because they are educated and intelligent, and have brains to conceive another state of things, a new *régime*—liberty.

"BEING TRACKED BY MOUCHARDS."

The Russians are too used to guard their words and be self-controlled to be too vehement in their speech and manner, and are trained to keep all discontent of the kind inside, when in public. But amongst friends and relations assembled in the *salon*, with doors and windows shut tight, the "samovar" (tea-urn) singing, the large glasses of tea, mounted in their silver stands, circulating, those of the party, especially the younger and more ardent, give free vent to their sentiments. Then are their criticisms on the existing state of affairs pointed and animated, their complaints and accusations just; and I looked forward with pleasure to these reunions, which made the long, long winter evenings pass so pleasantly. Caution, however, was never disregarded; any noise within or without, the entrance of a servant, or unexpected guest, and suddenly the conversation changes, the animation disappears, only the eyes which still sparkle regard each other attentively and rest on the best known and friendliest faces. This distrust, this fear of being surprised, betrayed, is a characteristic trait of these gatherings. For people, knowing the espionage

carried on at public places by spies (people personally polished and agreeable), feel that it is possible for an enemy unawares to enter their circle, and retail all their conversation to the police, with certain additions perhaps. That is why there is such a marked disproportion in what is concealed, and the precautions used to conceal it. I have often scarcely suppressed a smile, for what have some of them to hide so carefully?

Drawn together by the same education, the same situation, the same endless suspicion, there are in every city or town certain "sets" or divisions of society apart. These circles are connected all over the country, and have centres at St. Petersburg and Moscow, that in the capital being the headquarters of our Socialism. There is, however, amongst these associations no organisation generally, each one acting for himself, each one studying separately to do something injurious to the Government, not fearing to risk their lives. Now every meeting, every organisation, not only political, but the most innocent, is strictly forbidden in Russia. Socialists have certain ideas and principles, the most general being those expressed in an ancient formula, one hundred years old, called the "Declaration of the Rights of Men." Also we ponder and try to discover the means of realising or working these principles; some prefer a Republic, like the French; others, a Constitutional Monarchy, as in England.

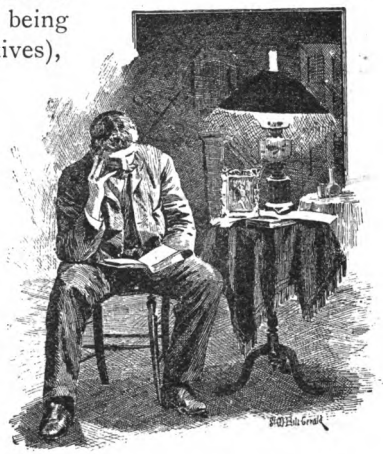


"TO READ WITH NO SPIRIT."

Republic! Constitution! That is our dream. But what to do for its realisation? What will bring either form of these coveted Governments? Ah! nothing. That costs too much in Russia—liberty, life—more. So we Radicals prefer to wait, to temporise, reserving our intervention for the time when it is brought to pass. That is why, at first interested in the meetings of George's friends, I hoped for new strength, not bold but active, as some time after my return I felt a continually increasing lassitude and weariness. A like feeling seemed to spring up within

me in regard to inner life. Feeble and worn out on my arrival at W——, I had been happy to rest in such a home, with family affection, care, and the company of well-bred people. My health, books, visits, and the reunions which took place, sometimes at George's house, sometimes at one of his friends, for a while filled up my time. But as my strength returned and I began to know better the society into which fate had thrown me, a feeling of emptiness and uselessness in my present existence seized me, and became more intense day by day.

At this time I am in relation with the local revolutionary society, and attend the meetings, but the police surveillance, and the fear of being tracked by the *mouchards* (detectives), make me restrict my visits to a few. I am also a member of the Red Cross Society, which I am able to benefit by sums of money given by myself and friends. I also try to read regularly, which in this country life, far from all temples of learning, is an effort in which I do not meet with much success, and I regret more and more not being able to take up my studies from where they had been interrupted by my arrest. To read with no spirit, to have to appear and converse as a guest, to consider by the light of sad experience what to apply oneself to, and to think of anything to comfort and alleviate the sufferings and privations imposed on the exiles living in Siberia is not much to do ; indeed, very little, when one is convinced of the necessity of working to the full extent of one's powers for the deliverance of one's country, especially with such *souvenirs* of prison horrors and Siberian life as mine.



"SITTING NEAR A READING LAMP."

This need of activity, and the passiveness of those around, made me feel that to live this life for five years longer would be unbearable to me. I have a plan. In the evening, I unfold it to George. (Uncle Paul's eldest son had always been good to me and Serge, and we were true friends.) He is sitting near a reading-lamp, and under its light I see him turn pale suddenly. He rises and takes a turn up and down the room, then comes and

sits by me and talks long and earnestly, striving to convince me of the futility of trying to do anything for my country, pointing out the number of victims already sacrificed, and the disasters the least imprudence would bring, not only on me, but on him and his family. I must spare them.

This last duty I am well aware of. As to the impossibility of doing any good, that is another thing. I attribute failure to a timid passiveness, with which I charge my cousin and his friends. Though George is still friendly, the subject leads to many arguments between us, and we return to it repeatedly alone, or at the weekly gatherings, where the talk turns upon political parties, Revolutionists and Liberals! My frankness costs me dear now. I am suspected by my relations, and undergo numerous interrogations. Where have I been? Whom have I seen? As if I had not enough trouble with the police. Every week I must go to the bureau.

The officers know me for the relation of a magistrate, and are fairly civil. The gendarmes come twice during the winter to search our house—the first time, because of the arrest of some local revolutionist, whom they fancy I am acquainted with; the second, on account of the correspondence, quite open, which I had been carrying on with a fellow-exile.

Both times, crest-fallen, the police had to go away without finding anything to compromise me. These police visits rather frighten our acquaintance in the town, who keep at a distance from us for a time. I am busy enough, too, going backwards and forwards to the bureau (office), where I am summoned and questioned upon any Nihilist affair that has taken place in any part of the country. I have to explain different passages in the letters I receive from my late companion in Siberia. These letters are stopped in the post by the police, read, and then delivered to me unsealed and "censured."

To all these inevitable "delights" of police surveillance I must not forget to add that often their stupidity is more exasperating still. One evening, during a concert given by the members of a neighbouring circle—in which my sister-in-law was to take part, and at which only the members, their families, and those whom they invited to attend were present—a gendarme, half-drunk, entered the hall, and in a loud voice and rude manner insisted on my leaving under pretext that it was a public place, and such, as a "suspect," I was forbidden to frequent. Another time, we were taking an afternoon airing on the outer boulevards of the town, which served

very well as a "promenade" for the town, Annette and Aunt Vera driving, George, some others, and myself on horseback, when we met the governor and his family in their carriage returning to the town. All our party being official like the governor's, we, of course, exchanged greetings and continued our way. A few minutes later, a mounted gendarme dashed up to us at full gallop, and, seizing my bridle, ordered me to stop. He was followed by two other officers, and, amid the general consternation, declared that he had

"I UNDERGO NUMEROUS INTERROGATIONS."

received an order to arrest me and take me to the central office. Then, allowing me time to dismount, we started for the bureau. Such a group; myself the centre, surrounded by four gendarmes, two mounted, two on foot, followed by my aunt's carriage. What a grotesque *cortége*, traversing slowly through the town, and exciting in its passage the greatest astonishment

and curiosity! On arriving at the bureau, where George had preceded us, I learnt that M. le Gouverneur had ordered my arrest by *telephone*, probably because I was outside the limits of the town in which I was living, a town which, like many others, unfortified and increasing yearly, had no precise boundary. This last point upon which George insisted was well known to the greater number of the police and to the governor.

"INSISTED ON MY LEAVING."

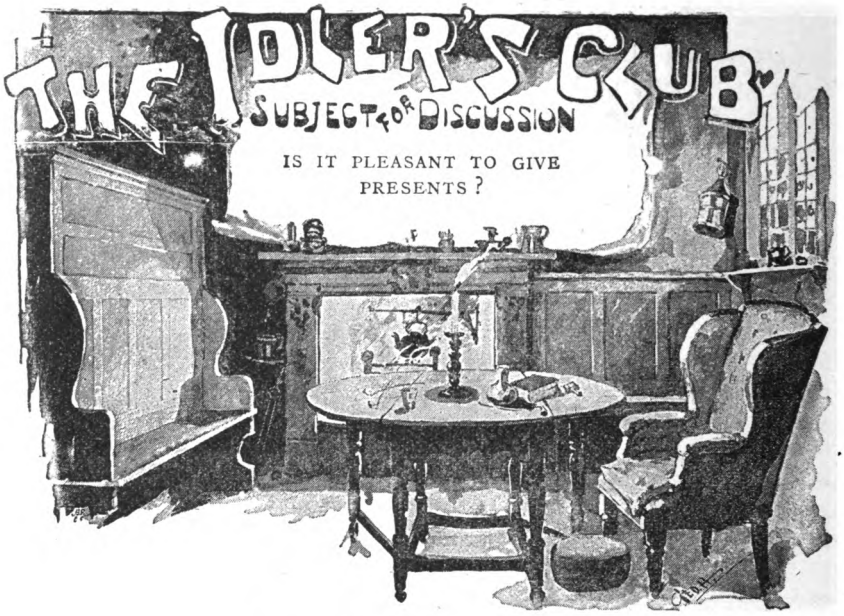
Why they were so obstinate in failing to recognise this I do not quite know. Perhaps to give some appearance for the unqualified order of the governor, which was the talk of the town. After the

enquiry, purely official, for the punishment of my misdemeanour, I am notified to leave the town of W——, and to go and live in a distant hamlet in the same province; also my time of supervision is prolonged by one year.

These arbitrary prolongations of the sentence, which the administration delights to bestow upon exiles and suspects, constitute for them a veritable scourge, a hopeless despair. For my part, however, I received this last decree of the Government quite indifferently as regarding the lengthened supervision, and the order to quit the town with a joy it was difficult to conceal, for at the moment of the order I had firmly decided to free myself from the unbearable restraint and suspicion, and flee either abroad or to some place near the capital, where, under a new name, I could follow my inclination, and take an active part in revolutionary movements. Consideration for my aunt and George, whom every one would not fail to hold responsible for my flight, had hitherto restrained me. The governor's order had now come to relieve me, and this obstacle, so difficult to vanquish, was now removed. So much the better.

As to others in the future to be encountered, and of which I alone shall run the danger—*Nous verrons.*

[THE END.]



Marie Corelli considers it a very doubtful amusement.

I must confess that I consider the "pleasantness" of giving presents a very doubtful kind of amusement. For example, when one spends a goodly sum (as I once did) on the purchase of a silver inkstand for a friend's wedding gift, and discovers that she has received ten other silver inkstands, one does not feel quite happy about it. In any case, it is a mistake to be carried away by enthusiasm into the offering of gifts. A true experience of mine may be here worth chronicling. Charmed on one occasion by a well-known actress, I sent to her, as a tribute of admiration, a pair of valuable turquoise earrings, which had formerly belonged to the great actress, Mrs. Siddons. Up to the moment of my thus parting with them, they had been a sort of heirloom in my family, as precious as the favourite walking-stick of Sir Walter Scott, or a portion of the MS. of Beethoven, both of which treasures I fortunately possess. I wrote a letter as an accompaniment to the gift, and delivered the packet myself at the actress's house. *Three months elapsed before I received any acknowledgment of my offering!* and all pleasantness, as well as enthusiasm, in the giving was naturally put an end to! An equally well-known actor behaved somewhat similarly to me, though in his case it was nothing of intrinsic value that was

offered, but only a book of my own. He had, however, expressed a wish to have this book (it was "Wormwood: a Drama of Paris"), and, therefore, I considered it only courteous to comply with his desire. I sent it to him, with a friendly note, and a fitting inscription on the title-page. This happened a little more than *two years ago*, and I have not *yet* received a word of acknowledgment! Again, the "pleasantness" of giving is made *non est!* I think that most people fail to appreciate the kindly spirit in which gifts are proffered, being frequently too prone to imagine that they are given "for a purpose," *i.e.*, "a sprat to catch a whale" sort of thing. In this commercial age, even friends suspect each other of "having a motive" hidden behind the most graceful courtesies. Thus a wedding present is given "*in order to get an invitation to the wedding*," which is an exceedingly absurd idea, seeing what wretchedly dull entertainments wedding receptions are, where no one with a sane sense of enjoyment would ever wish to be. And, till this false notion of "motives" is dismissed, I think there is no "pleasantness" in giving presents, as you lay yourself open to the vulgar suspicion of wanting something in return, and your friendly feelings go for nothing. Of course, in the home circle, where the love of those around you has been tried and proved, and no "motive" can possibly be suspected, give, by all means, the most beautiful and valuable gifts you can afford, for the light of joy and gratitude on the faces of those who are dear to you is a "pleasantness" indeed that can never be outweighed by any other pleasure in the world.

* * * *

Barry Pain does not believe in giving presents.

No one who is sensitive and sympathetic can give a present. He must feel that he is putting somebody under an obligation by his generosity, and he knows how he himself would hate to be put under an obligation. There is really very much to be said for this nobility of character that refuses to humiliate others; yet it is frequently misunderstood, and is supposed to be meanness. Sometimes this same nobility masquerades as cowardice; its possessor neglects an opportunity to save life, because he knows how intolerable he himself would find it to owe his existence to some stranger to whom he had not even been introduced, to be indebted for life to some man whom, very possibly, he might prefer not to know. In this respect, the Duke of Guisebury showed a nice taste; he

had the misfortune to pull a lady from under the horse's hoofs, a presumptuous attempt to compel gratitude which he subsequently felt was a mistake. He could only put himself right by incurring a similar obligation to the same lady, and that was what he did. He gave her an easy one. She merely had to dash the poison from his lips. The two debts cancelled, and they all went out to a Cornish island, where, in consequence of the erection of a breakwater, everybody came back from the North Pole. My recollection of the "Dancing Girl" is vague: but I trust that I am not inaccurate.

* * * *

But once did so.

I once gave a present, but it was long ago, when I was a small boy. Somebody had given pocket-knives to my brother and myself. My brother was older than I was, and he was allowed to choose which knife he would have; he was mean enough to take the better one of the two, the one with the tortoise-shell handle. The handle of my knife was white bone; my brother called it ivory, but that was partly to pacify me and partly to quiet his own conscience, which reproached him for his selfishness in taking the better knife. After the choice was made, I offered to exchange knives with him; I offered to give him my knife and a rather worn piece of chocolate that I had by me for his knife. He refused. Then I thought that I had a good idea. I handed him my knife, and told him that I gave it him as a free present, and wanted nothing for it. I supposed that either he would refuse to take it, in which case I should be no worse off than I was before, or that he would emulate my generosity and make me a present of his own tortoise-shell-handled knife. I did not see that any third course was possible; but he discovered one. He kept both knives.

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Burgin thinks it depends upon the recipient.

It depends very much upon the recipient. Conscience sometimes prevents a man from indulging in the pleasure of giving things to his own sisters because such a course leads him into extravagance, and all extravagance is wrong; but I never knew considerations of that kind interfere with his presenting things to someone else's sisters. Some men are mean enough to insist on fixing the wedding ceremony for the bride's birthday, with a view of giving her one annual present instead of two; others take an unholy delight in giving their wives things which will come in usefully for the house.

The meanest man I ever knew gave his bedridden wife a hunter. "But she can't ride it," said a friend. "What's the use of giving her a horse?" "Oh," said the husband, "you see, some day she may get better, and then I'll teach her to ride. Meantime, I'll exercise the animal myself." He exercised that horse (in the hunting field) for four seasons, and then bought her another, which broke his neck. When his wife heard of the accident, she said that if he hadn't been such a thoughtful man he might have lived for threescore years and ten and bought her half-a-dozen similarly useful birthday presents.

* * * *

Especially in the East.

In the East, it is most assuredly pleasant to give presents, because if you can only give more than your opponent you will always gain your case. The Official sits on a divan at the end of his apartment, and you approach to kiss the hem of his garment. If he has been informed by your Dragoman beforehand that you are prepared to give him a present, and is satisfied with the amount, he will rise up graciously and entreat you to sit by his side in the place of honour. You refuse to do so. You say (through your Dragoman. He's paid to abase himself for you, and likes doing it), "Dog, and son of a Giaour, that I am, let me grovel at your Excellency's feet, and bask in the light of your countenance." His Excellency thereupon raises you up, protesting that he does not understand why you wish him to cast dirt on his own beard, and you timidly partake of coffee and cigarettes, sitting on the extreme edge of the divan, with hands meekly hidden in your sleeves, your eyes cast upon the ground. If the proposed present is not enough, the Official does not rise at your entrance, but sits stolidly smoking, and apparently studying with absorbing interest the oak carvings over your head. Then you murmur the ceremonial salute, and say, in the middle of it, under your breath, "Fifty liras more"; and he says, "May your liver never be as water—I'll take a hundred—and may your shadow for ever increase." You rejoin, "What saith the Koran? Is it not a sin to oppress the stranger —I'll make it seventy—in the land, and deny him justice?" If the Official thinks there is no more to be got out of you, that settles the matter, and he replies, "Blessed be the stranger in the land—I'll take it—who has studied the words of the Prophet, and seeketh justice from me." Of course you win your case.

Barr tells of a friend in the workhouse.

Wedding presents are all right if you know how to deal with them. The story of two friends of mine who both live in the West End of London, neighbours almost, although they don't visit each other, will serve to illustrate the fact that everything depends on the way you go about a problem. One lives in the Cromwell Road, South Kensington, and the other is an inmate of the Fulham workhouse, a large luxurious building of the early Clapham style of architecture. Sammy Pegrim, the pauper, attributes his position in the workhouse to two mistakes in early life. First, he ran away with his girl when they were both too young to know better, and married her out in the country somewhere. I am vague about the exact spot, because Sammy's memory is failing, and he sometimes names one village and sometimes another as the scene of the tragedy. He figures out now (sadly) that as there are $2\frac{7}{8}$ths women to every man in this country, a person is foolish to elope with one, because he is reasonably certain under these distressing statistical circumstances of getting the consent of all concerned if he merely asks for her, and is thus saved the expense of an elopement, while the bride's happy father provides a wedding breakfast. As it was, Mrs. Sammy's father, after making sure that they were married properly, pretended to be highly indignant, and saved money by casting off the young couple. The second mistake was that Sammy in the early enthusiasm of married life gave a very expensive wedding present to a dear friend of his, who was married in the conventional manner some two weeks after his own runaway ceremony. The result of the first mistake was that Sammy gathered in no wedding presents, and consequently every one he bestowed was a dead loss. The second mistake hampered him till he reached the happy haven of the Fulham workhouse. He tried to live up to his first expensive present. People said, "Oh, we are sure of a silver service from Pegrim," and then they went and got married. Sammy wanted to show the old man, his hated father-in-law, that he was getting on in the world, and so always gave a silver set to his marrying friends. And the awfullest luck followed him. The moment that unfortunate couple became friendly with a man or woman, that man or woman was sure to get married. He tells me (when they allow him a day off at the workhouse) that no two friends of his ever married each other. He never had the pleasure of knowing one present scored off two friends. They always married strangers. A few years ago he tried to rally, and resolved to cut

all his unmarried acquaintances, and be friendly only with married people. But, alas! the influenza came along that year, and one or the other died, and the survivor invariably married again, sending an invitation to poor Pegrim. He never had the chance of marrying again himself and rectifying his first mistake, so he gave up at last, and now when the church bell near rings merrily for a wedding Sammy takes to his bed, but when it tolls he is cheerful, and something like his old self again.

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And of another In South Kensington.

The Hon. Septum Langford, M.P., of Cromwell Road, South Kensington, had no better start in life up to the date of his marriage than Sammy Pegrim had. But he had a mathematical mind. He concealed the fact that he was engaged to a nice girl, and made friends everywhere. He was hail-fellow-well-met with all. Then he sprung his marriage on the public before any of his friends had time to cool. They saw they were in for it, and many of them compromised on plated spoons. When in doubt give plated spoons in a blue or crimson lined case. Langford raked in all the necessities of life and 237 cases of spoons. His wife was appalled, but Langford had figured ahead, and refused to sell the cases to a second-hand dealer. He put all the spoons in one locked room, and took out a burglar's insurance on them. Then, when a friend married, he unlocked that room and gave away one case of spoons. Luck is always with the long-sighted man. The spoon-collecting craze came on, and the presents were always appreciated. Besides, he sold some that were getting old-fashioned, and therefore valuable in the eyes of collectors, and made a good thing out of it. Naturally, being free from all care in the matter of wedding presents, his nerves were not shattered by unexpected news of a prospective wedding, as poor Pegrim's were, and so he gave his whole mind to business and prospered. His election to Parliament is too recent to require comment here. He is a wealthy man, and all because he knew how to deal with that feature of modern brigandage known as the Wedding Present Swindle.

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Alden says yes ——to some persons.

To persons of a malignant turn of mind, the practice of giving presents is undoubtedly a pleasant one. Not very long ago a friend of mine was married, and I was shown the wedding presents. The unfortunate young pair had received seventeen fish-knives (fifteen of which were plated); nineteen "coseys"—if

that is the way to spell the word; nine decanters; and not a single drop of anything to drink. Now it so happens that the husband happened to be an extremely desirable man, and there was a widespread feeling of disappointment among the young ladies of his acquaintance when he married the lady of his choice. Of course, the disappointed ones revenged themselves with fish knives and coseys, and gloated in secret over the unhappy frame of mind of a helpless bride who found herself doomed to pass the rest of her life in the possession of presents which politeness forbade her to sell, or to throw away, and which daily reminded her of the undying enmity of her unsuccessful rivals. Of course, it may be said that seventeen simultaneous fish-knives were only a coincidence, and that they simply signified that the givers were persons devoid of judgment. Nobody, however, who has made a study of wedding presents, can doubt that they showed malignity, rather than mere idiocy, on the part of the givers.

* * * *

He gives reasons.

As for other presents they must be pleasant to give, for the reason that they are invariably the sort of thing that the giver likes. When a man determines to give me a present he always gives me what he himself likes, and never by any chance what I like. For example, I have a near relative—a clergyman—who, being a generous man with a sincere regard for me, invariably sends me twice a year a small present. It is always a religious book of the most pronounced evangelical character. Now my relative knows not merely that I am a High Churchman, but that I have a longing for certain books which I cannot afford to buy. I want complete editions of Balzac, Zola, and Cardinal Newman, but my good relative never thinks of giving them to me, and never asks himself what books I should like to have. The result is that my bookshelves are gradually filling up with books that I never dream of opening, but which I cannot give away or sell to a second-hand book dealer without hurting my friend's feelings.

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And cites Instances.

A few years ago I kept a small dog, and a friend who was fond of cats made me a present of a Persian cat. The dog swore that he would have that cat's life, and, in order to show my appreciation of my friend's kindness, I had to get rid of my dog. The very next week another friend presented me with a canary bird, which of all animals, except perhaps a Mormon missionary, is the most uninteresting. The

cat instantly said that the house was not large enough for her and the bird at the same time, and that she should remove the latter at the first opportunity. I can't kill the cat, and I can't let her kill the canary. The result is that someone has to watch the cat all day, and sit up with the bird all night, to prevent a massacre. I will not speak of the cigars which are now and then given me, and which are selected according to the taste of the giver, and not in accordance with my taste; or of the neckties that my wife and daughters give me, and which, though perfectly lovely from a feminine point of view, are leading the entire police force to look upon me with undisguised suspicion. The givers, having selected the sort of presents which they themselves like, enjoy giving, but the unhappy recipients do not share this joy. That it is a great deal more blessed to give than it is to receive there cannot be the slightest doubt.

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He has a plan.

In a properly organised state of society there will be no wedding presents. The State will provide a service of gold plate which will be presented to every bride for one month only, when it will revert to the State, and be passed on to the next bride. Heavy penalties will be imposed upon persons who venture upon gratifying private malice with fish-knives and other articles. In that day a man can marry without being compelled to believe that most of his supposed friends are either enemies or idiots, and he can receive the news that this or that friend is about to marry without the saddening reflection that he must go and buy another fish-knife, or be held to be churlish or miserly. As for all other presents the State will hold itself in readiness to take them in pawn, and to lend the owner their full market value for an indefinite period without interest. Of course this would be an expensive business for the State, but so is all socialism, and now that we seem to be going in for socialism, and leaving posterity to balance the ledger, we might as well try a form of socialism that will be as a balm to the hearts of the miserable receivers of undesirable presents. I do not wish it to be understood that I object to receiving presents. On the contrary, good cigars (Concha size, Colorado Maduro) will always be thankfully received. What I wish to point out is that presents, of whatever nature, should be chosen in order to give pleasure to the recipient, and not, as is now the rule, to give pleasure only to the giver. This is, I know, a novel and startling idea, but I am convinced that there is something in it.

Phillpotts thinks it produces a pleasant sensation.

Nobody who is not a churl or a miser can doubt that the giving of presents produces an exceedingly pleasant sensation in the giver. Some of the most beautiful displays of tact and delicacy man is capable of come into play in the matter of gift-making; and the art of it lies in so ordering the matter that the receiver shall seem to be doing an act of favour or courtesy to the donor. To successfully bestow a handsome present upon a proud man is an artistic and difficult performance. In the matter of pride, for instance, I myself am a very fair second to Lucifer. This my friends know well enough, and they simply exhaust their energy and ingenuity in scattering choice concerns about my path, and in so wrapping up and hiding them that I shall mistake their benevolent designs and accept their gifts under the impression that they are the gainers, not I. Their success is wonderful. They delude and hoodwink me without the least apparent difficulty; but I, who know my own secret pride so well, feel sure that these friends of mine have really to cope with tremendous difficulties. Personally, I admit that I am wrong. One ought to accept presents in the spirit which prompts them. It is not only more blessed to give than to receive, but much easier. If you can accept benefits of substantial sort from a fellow-creature, and still honestly respect him and regard him and speak well of him, you show yourself a man of exceptional parts. When Jones let his vegetable-marrow vine grow over Smith's wall (on the shallow pretext that he had no more room for it in his own back garden), and begged Smith to help himself to the marrows in return for accommodating the vine, I happen to know that, though Smith took the marrows, he lost his respect and admiration for Jones from that day forward, though they had been friends from boyhood. Giving presents, therefore, may prove a dangerous luxury. Never risk the affection of a good man by offering him anything worth having, for there are people so constituted that they find it almost impossible to pardon or forget a kindness. But you can always give yourself a present without wounding anybody's feelings. And it is good practice. On your birthday and on public holidays and on festivals of the Church, especially Christmas Day, and upon other occasions also, as your judgment may suggest, spend your money frankly and freely upon yourself. Suffer no paltry pride or self-consciousness to stand between you and the gift. Accept it in a grateful spirit as coming from the man who loves you better than anything else in the world. And the charm of

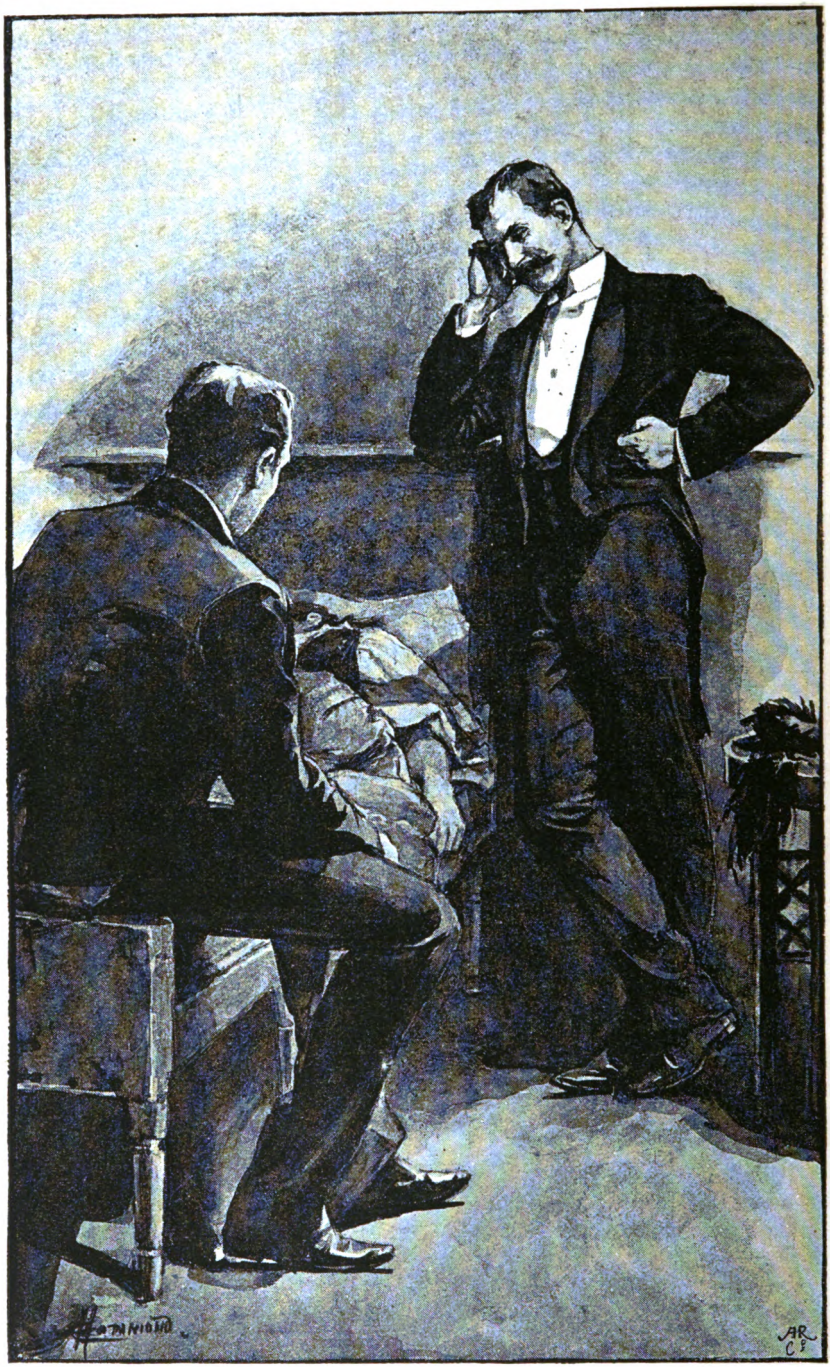
such gifts, where one is both donor and recipient, must be two-fold: you are doing an action morally to be commended, and you are accepting a handsome present with thankfulness—two laudable achievements rolled into one. Such a performance is like Mercy, "It blesseth him that gives and him that takes." Try.

* * * *

Jerome listens to voices.

It was I who suggested this discussion. One afternoon, as I sat sipping tea in an aërated bread shop, I overheard female voices behind me. "I suppose we shall have to give her something," said the first voice. "Oh, I shan't," retorted the other more cheerfully, "I shall write her a letter." I know that letter. It will bubble over with generous sentiments. It will enumerate thirty-seven beautiful and expensive things that the writer "thought of" giving, and seventy-two reasons why she didn't. It will imply that from one end of London to the other there was to be found nothing "*nice enough*" to be bestowed upon so well-beloved a person as the recipient of the letter; but will suggest that in other places and happier times some gift worthy to express the writer's feelings may perhaps be lighted upon; and it will conclude with, "And so, dear, you must take the will for the deed, and with *fondest* love," &c., &c. The question is, has not the giving of presents become a mere function, from which the meaning has died out? In theory the giving of presents is the outward and visible symbol of an inward and spiritual graciousness—an expression of kindly feeling and affection. The idea is that one evening you say to yourself, "Let me see, why it's only a month to dear cousin Jane's birthday. Now let me think what I can give her that she will like to have, and that will in some slight way show my love for the day that gave her to us and to the world." When such is the sentiment giving is a keen delight; but too often what we really say is, "By Jove! if to-morrow isn't cousin Jane's birthday. Hanged if I hadn't clean forgotten all about it. I don't know what to give her." You hurry off to the nearest stationer's shop. "I want something suitable for a present," you explain to the young lady behind the counter; "not too expensive." "Yes, sir," says the saleswoman; "is it for a lady or a gentleman?" "Oh, a lady," you reply. The girl reaches down a tray load of card cases, and hands you an elegant little snake-skin affair bound with gold. "That's very pretty, sir," she murmurs; "eight pound fifteen. And you could have the initials put on the side for another—" "No, no," you interrupt,

almost irritably, handing it back, "I just want some little simple thing. It's only a relation." Then the intelligent girl brings forward a shoddy-looking photo frame. "These are very nice," she explains; "we sell a lot of these for presents—three and elevenpence." "That's the sort of thing," you say, without looking at it, "very pretty, indeed. You haven't got a box you could put it in, have you?" The girl finds you a box for it, and you buy a fourpenny birthday card and put in with it; and you come out of the shop quite light-hearted once more, feeling, "Well, there, that's off my mind." You post it off to Jane, and Jane sits down and writes a letter, calling it a "beautiful present," and saying that it was just the very thing she wanted; and, as she closes the envelope, observes to her aunt, "What on earth am I to do with it? I wish people wouldn't send presents, they are such a nuisance. Now I shall have to stick this up somewhere, and it will spoil the room." I have sometimes thought it would be better if, instead of making the giving of presents a mere tiresome and expensive farce, we gave only where it was a joy to give. But, maybe, the fancy goods trade would suffer somewhat severely from such limit.



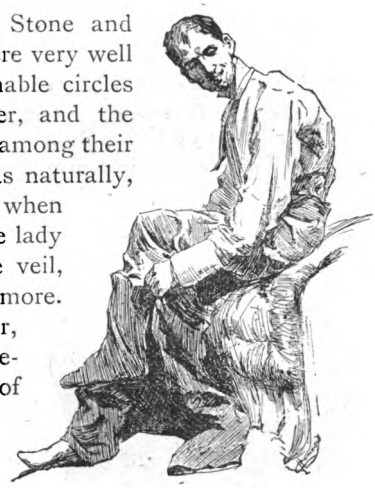
" LORD SANNOX WAS LEANING AGAINST THE WALL WITH HIS HAND TO HIS SIDE, LAUGHING SILENTLY."

The Case of Lady Sannox.

By A. Conan Doyle.

Illustrations by the Misses Hammond.

THE relations between Douglas Stone and the notorious Lady Sannox were very well known both among the fashionable circles of which she was a brilliant member, and the scientific bodies which numbered him among their most illustrious *confrères*. There was naturally, therefore, a very widespread interest when it was announced one morning that the lady had absolutely and for ever taken the veil, and that the world would see her no more. When, at the very tail of this rumour, there came the assurance that the celebrated operating surgeon, the man of steel nerves, had been found in the morning by his valet, seated on one side of his bed, smiling pleasantly upon the universe, with both legs jammed into one side of his breeches, and his great brain about as valuable as a cup full of porridge, the matter was strong enough to give quite a little thrill of interest to folk who had never hoped that their jaded nerves were capable of such a sensation.



"SMILING PLEASANTLY UPON THE UNIVERSE."

Douglas Stone in his prime was one of the most remarkable men in England. Indeed, he could hardly be said to have ever reached his prime, for he was but nine-and-thirty at the time of this little incident. Those who knew him best were aware that, famous as he was as a surgeon, he might have succeeded with even greater rapidity in any of a dozen lines of life. He could have cut his way to fame as a soldier, struggled to it as an explorer, bullied for it in the courts, or built it out of stone and iron as an engineer. He was born to be great, for he could plan what another man dare not do, and he could do what another man dare not plan. In surgery none could follow him. His nerve, his judgment, his intuition, were things apart. Again and again his knife cut away

death, but grazed the very springs of life in doing it, until his assistants were as white as the patient. His energy, his audacity, his full-blooded self-confidence—does not the memory of them still linger to the south of Marylebone Road and the north of Oxford Street?

And his vices were as magnificent as his virtues, and infinitely more picturesque. Large as was his income, and it was the third largest of all professional men in London, it was far beneath the luxury of his living. Deep in his complex nature lay a rich vein of sensualism, at the sport of which he placed all the prizes of his life. The eye, the ear, the touch, the palate, all were his masters. The bouquet of old vintages, the scent of rare exotics, the curves and tints of the daintiest potteries of Europe, it was to these that the quick-running stream of gold was transformed. And then there came his sudden mad passion for Lady Sannox, when a single interview with two challenging glances and a whispered word set him ablaze. She was the loveliest woman in London, and the only one to him. He was one of the handsomest men in London, but not the only one to her. She had a liking for new experiences, and was gracious to most men who wooed her. It may have been cause or it may have been effect that Lord Sannox looked fifty, though he was but six-and-thirty.

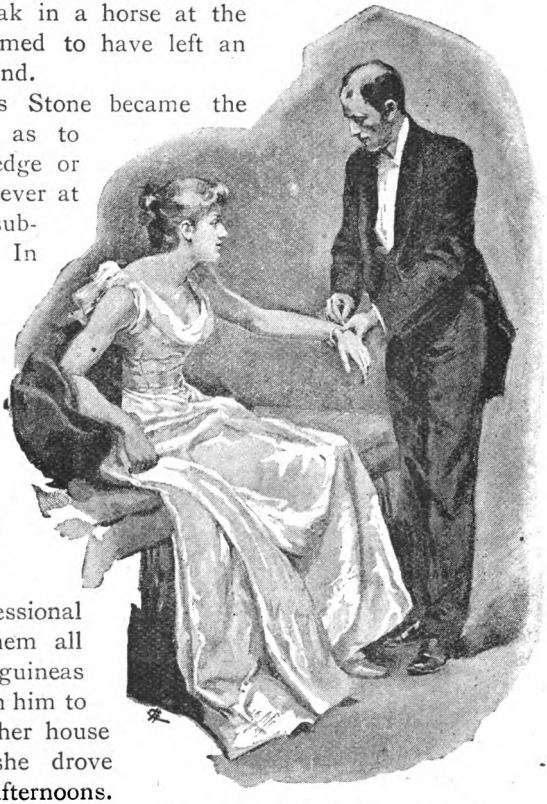
"A QUIET, SILENT MAN."

He was a quiet, silent, neutral-tinted man, with thin lips and heavy eyelids, much given to gardening, and full of quiet, home-like habits. He had at one time been fond of acting, had even rented a theatre in London, and on its boards had first seen Miss Marion Dawson, to whom he had offered his hand, his title, and the third of a county. Since his marriage this early hobby had become distasteful to him. Even in private theatricals it was no longer possible to persuade him to exercise the talent which he had often shown that he possessed. He was happier with a spud and a watering-can among his orchids and chrysanthemums.

It was quite an interesting problem whether he was absolutely

devoid of sense, or miserably wanting in spirit. Did he know his lady's ways and condone them, or was he a mere blind, doting fool? It was a point to be discussed over the teacups in snug little drawing-rooms, or with the aid of a cigar in the bow windows of clubs. Bitter and plain were the comments among the men upon his conduct. There was but one who had a good word to say for him, and he was the most silent member in the smoking-room. He had seen him break in a horse at the University, and it seemed to have left an impression upon his mind.

But when Douglas Stone became the favourite, all doubts as to Lord Sannox's knowledge or ignorance were set for ever at rest. There was no subterfuge about Stone. In his high-handed, impetuous fashion, he set all caution and discretion at defiance. The scandal became notorious. A learned body intimated that his name had been struck from the list of its vice-presidents. Two friends implored him to consider his professional credit. He cursed them all three, and spent forty guineas on a bangle to take with him to the lady. He was at her house every evening, and she drove in his carriage in the afternoons. There was not an attempt on either side to conceal their relations; but there came at last a little incident to interrupt them.



"SPENT FORTY GUINEAS ON A BANGLE."

It was a dismal winter's night, very cold and gusty, with the wind whooping in the chimneys, and blustering against the window-panes. A thin spatter of rain tinkled on the glass with each fresh sough of the gale, drowning for the instant the dull gurgle and drip from the eaves. Douglas Stone had finished his

dinner, and sat by his fire in the study, a glass of rich port upon the malachite table at his elbow. As he raised it to his lips, he held it up against the lamplight, and watched with the eye of a connoisseur the tiny scales of beeswing which floated in its rich ruby depths. The fire, as it spurted up, threw fitful lights upon his bold, clear-cut face, with its widely-opened grey eyes, its thick and yet firm lips, and the deep square jaw, which had something Roman in its strength and its animalism. He smiled from time to time as he nestled back in his luxurious chair. Indeed, he had a right to feel well pleased, for against the advice of six colleagues, he had performed an operation that day of which only two cases were on record, and the result had been brilliant beyond all expectation. No other man in London would have had the daring to plan, or the skill to execute, such a heroic measure.

But he had promised Lady Sannox to see her that evening, and it was already half-past eight. His hand was outstretched to the bell to order the carriage when he heard the dull thud of the knocker. An instant later there was the shuffling of feet in the hall, and the sharp closing of a door.

"A PATIENT TO SEE YOU, SIR."

"A patient to see you, sir, in the consulting room," said the butler.

"About himself?"

"No, sir, I think he wants you to go out."

"It is too late," cried Douglas Stone peevishly, "I won't go."

"This is his card, sir." The butler presented it upon the gold salver which had been given to his master by the wife of a Prime Minister.

"'Hamil Ali, Smyrna.' Hum! The fellow is a Turk, I suppose."

"Yes, sir. He seems as if he came from abroad, sir. And he's in a terrible way."

"Tut, tut! I have an engagement. I must go somewhere else. But I'll see him. Show him in here, Pim."

A few moments later the butler swung open the door and ushered in a small and decrepid man, who walked with a bent back and with the forward push of the face and blink o fthe eyes which

goes with extreme short sight. His face was swarthy, and his hair and beard of the deepest black. In one hand he held a turban of white muslin striped with red, in the other a small chamois leather bag.

"Good evening," said Douglas Stone, when the butler had closed the door. "You speak English, I presume?"

"Yes, sir. I am from Asia Minor, but I speak English when I speak slow."

"You wanted me to go out, I understand?"

"Yes, sir. I wanted very much that you should see my wife."

"I could come in the morning, but I have an engagement which prevents me from seeing your wife to-night."

The Turk's answer was a singular one. He pulled the string which closed the mouth of the chamois leather bag, and poured a flood of gold on to the table.

"There are one hundred pounds there," said he, "and I promise you that it will not take you an hour. I have a cab ready at the door."

"I AM A CURIOSITY DEALER."

Douglas Stone glanced at his watch. An hour would not make it too late to visit Lady Sannox. He had been there later. And the fee was an extraordinarily high one. He had been pressed by his creditors lately, and he could not afford to let such a chance pass. He would go.

"What is the case?" he asked.

"Oh, it is so sad a one! So sad a one! You have not, perhaps, heard of the daggers of the Almohades?"

"Never."

"Ah, they are Eastern daggers of a great age, and of a singular shape, with the hilt like what you call a stirrup. I am a curiosity dealer, you understand, and that is why I have come to England from Smyrna, but next week I go back once more. Many things I brought with me, and I have few things left, but among them, to my sorrow, is one of these daggers."

"You will remember that I have an appointment, sir," said the surgeon, with some irritation. "Pray confine yourself to the necessary details."

"You will see that it is necessary. To-day my wife fell down in a faint in the room in which I keep my wares, and she cut her lower lip upon this cursed dagger of Almohades."

"I see," said Douglas Stone, rising. "And you wish me to dress the wound?"

"No, no, it is worse than that."

"What then?"

"These daggers are poisoned."

"Poisoned!"

"Yes, and there is no man, East or West, who can tell now what is the poison or what the cure. But all that is known I know, for my father was in this trade before me, and we have had much to do with these poisoned weapons."

"What are the symptoms?"

"Deep sleep, and death in thirty hours."

"And you say there is no cure. Why then should you pay me this considerable fee?"

"No drug can cure, but the knife may."

"And how?"

"The poison is slow of absorption. It remains for hours in the wound."

"Washing, then, might cleanse it?"

"No more than in a snake bite. It is too subtle and too deadly."

"Excision of the wound, then?"

"That is it. If it be on the finger, take the finger off. So said my father always. But think of where this wound is, and that it is my wife. It is dreadful!"

But familiarity with such grim matters may take the finer edge from a man's sympathy. To Douglas Stone this was already an interesting case, and he brushed aside as irrelevant the feeble objections of the husband.

"It appears to be that or nothing," said he, brusquely. "It is better to lose a lip than a life."

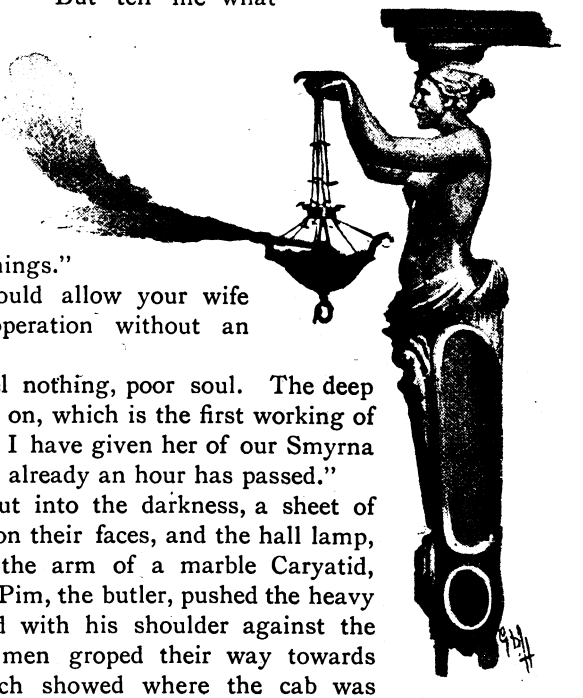
"Ah, yes, I know that you are right. Well, well, it is kismet, and it must be faced. I have the cab, and you will come with me and do this thing."

Douglas Stone took his case of bistourie from a drawer, and placed it with a roll of bandage and a compress of lint in his pocket. He must waste no more time if he were to see Lady Sannox.

"I am ready," said he, pulling on his overcoat. "Will you take a glass of wine before you go out into this cold air?"

His visitor shrunk away, with a protesting hand upraised.

"You forget that I am a Mussulman, and a true follower of the Prophet," said he. "But tell me what is the bottle of green glass which you have placed in your pocket?"



"It is chloroform."

"Ah, that also is forbidden to us. It is a spirit, and we make no use of such things."

"What! You would allow your wife to go through an operation without an anæsthetic?"

"Ah! she will feel nothing, poor soul. The deep sleep has already come on, which is the first working of the poison. And then I have given her of our Smyrna opium. Come, sir, for already an hour has passed."

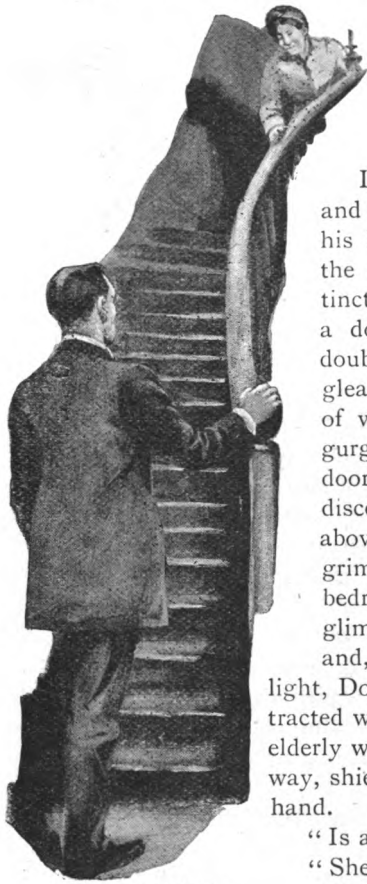
As they stepped out into the darkness, a sheet of rain was driven in upon their faces, and the hall lamp, which dangled from the arm of a marble Caryatid, went out with a fluff. Pim, the butler, pushed the heavy door to, straining hard with his shoulder against the wind, while the two men groped their way towards the yellow glare which showed where the cab was waiting. An instant later they were rattling upon their journey.

"Is it far?" asked Douglas Stone.

"Oh, no. We have a very little quiet place off the Euston Road."

The surgeon pressed the spring of his repeater and listened to the little tings which told him the hour. It was a quarter past nine. He calculated the distances, and the short time which it would take him to perform so trivial an operation. He ought to reach Lady Sannox by ten o'clock. Through the fogged windows he saw the blurred gas lamps dancing past, with occasionally the broader glare of a shop front. The rain was pelting and rattling upon the leathern top of the carriage, and the wheels swashed as they rolled through puddle and mud. Opposite to him the white headgear of his companion gleamed faintly through the obscurity. The surgeon felt in his pockets and arranged his needles, his ligatures, and his safety-pins that no time might be wasted when

they arrived. He chafed with impatience and drummed his foot upon the floor.



"UP THE WINDING STAIR."

But the cab slowed down at last and pulled up. In an instant Douglas Stone was out, and the Smyrna merchant's toe was at his very heel. "You can wait," said he to the driver.

It was a mean-looking house in a narrow and sordid street. The surgeon, who knew his London well, cast a swift glance into the shadows, but there was nothing distinctive, no shop, no movement, nothing but a double line of dull flat-faced houses, a double stretch of wet flagstones which gleamed in the lamplight, and a double rush of water in the gutters which swirled and gurgled towards the sewer gratings. The door which faced them was blotched and discoloured, and a faint light in the fan pane above it served to show the dust and the grime which covered it. Above, in one of the bedroom windows, there was a dull yellow glimmer. The merchant knocked loudly, and, as he turned his dark face towards the light, Douglas Stone could see that it was contracted with anxiety. A bolt was drawn, and an elderly woman with a taper stood in the doorway, shielding the thin flame with her gnarled hand.

"Is all well?" gasped the merchant.

"She is as you left her, sir."

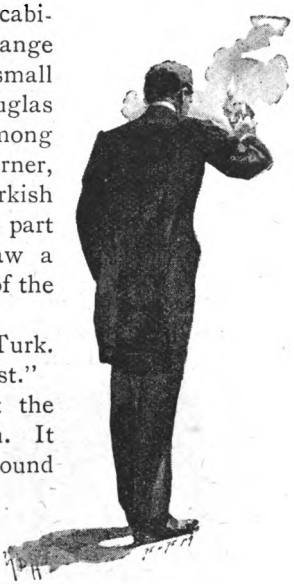
"She has not spoken?"

"No, she is in a deep sleep."

The merchant closed the door, and Douglas Stone walked down the narrow passage, glancing about him in some surprise as he did so. There was no oilcloth, no mat, no hat-rack. Deep gray dust and heavy festoons of cobwebs met his eyes everywhere. Following the old woman up the winding stair, his firm footfall echoed harshly through the silent house. There was no carpet.

The bedroom was on the second landing. Douglas Stone followed the old nurse into it, with the merchant at his heels. Here, at least, there was furniture and to spare. The floor was

littered and the corners piled with Turkish cabinets, inlaid tables, coats of chain mail, strange pipes, and grotesque weapons. A single small lamp stood upon a bracket on the wall. Douglas Stone took it down, and, picking his way among the lumber, walked over to a couch in the corner, on which lay a woman dressed in the Turkish fashion with yashmak and veil. The lower part of the face was exposed, and the surgeon saw a jagged cut which zigzagged along the border of the under lip.



"PICKED HIS WAY AMONG THE LUMBER."

"You will forgive the yashmak," said the Turk. "You know our views about woman in the East."

But the surgeon was not thinking about the yashmak. This was no longer a woman to him. It was a case. He stooped and examined the wound carefully.

"There are no signs of irritation," said he. "We might delay the operation until local symptoms develop."

The husband wrung his hands in incontrollable agitation.

"Oh! sir, sir," he cried. "Do not trifle. You do not know. It is deadly. I know, and I give you my assurance that an operation is absolutely necessary. Only the knife can save her."

"And yet I am inclined to wait," said Douglas Stone.

"That is enough," the Turk cried, angrily. "Every minute is of importance, and I cannot stand here and see my wife allowed to sink. It only remains for me to give you my thanks for having come, and to call in some other surgeon before it is too late."

Douglas Stone hesitated. To refund that hundred pounds was no pleasant matter. But of course if he left the case he must return the money. And if the Turk were right and the woman died his position before a coroner might be an embarrassing one.

"You have had personal experience of this poison?" he asked.

"I have."

"And you assure me that an operation is needful."

"I swear it by all that I hold sacred."

"The disfigurement will be frightful."

"I can understand that the mouth will not be a pretty one to kiss."

Douglas Stone turned fiercely upon the man. The speech was

a brutal one. But the Turk has his own fashion of talk and of thought, and there was no time for wrangling. Douglas Stone drew a bistoury from his case, opened it, and felt the keen straight edge with his forefinger. Then he held the lamp closer to the bed. Two dark eyes were gazing up at him through the slit in the yashmak. They were all iris, and the pupil was hardly to be seen.

"You have given her a very heavy dose of opium."

"Yes, she has had a good dose."

He glanced again at the dark eyes which looked straight at his own. They were dull and lustreless, but, even as he gazed, a little shifting sparkle came into them, and the lips quivered.

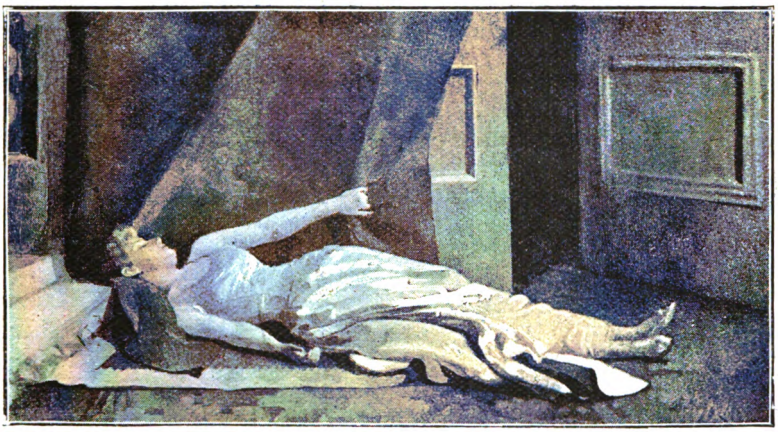
"She is not absolutely unconscious," said he.

"THE WOMAN SPRANG UP."

"Would it not be well to use the knife while it will be painless?"

The same thought had crossed the surgeon's mind. He grasped the wounded lip with his forceps, and with two swift cuts he took out a broad V shaped piece. The woman sprang up on the couch with a dreadful gurgling scream. Her covering was torn from her face. It was a face that he knew. In spite of that protruding upper lip and that slobber of blood, it was a face that he knew. She kept on putting her hand up to the gap and scream-

ing. Douglas Stone sat down at the foot of the couch with his knife and his forceps. The room was whirling round, and he had felt something go like a ripping seam behind his ear. A by-stander would have said that his face was the more ghastly of the two. As in a dream, or as if he had been looking at something at the play, he was conscious that the Turk's hair and beard lay upon the table, and that Lord Sannox was leaning against the wall with his hand to his side, laughing silently. The screams had died away now, and the dreadful head had dropped back again upon the pillow, but Douglas Stone still sat motionless, and Lord Sannox still chuckled quietly to himself.



"THE WOUND WAS FROM MY SIGNET RING."

"It was really very necessary for Marion, this operation," said he, "not physically, but morally, you know, morally."

Douglas Stone stooped forwards and began to play with the fringe of the coverlet. His knife tinkled down upon the ground, but he still held the forceps and something more.

"I had long intended to make a little example," said Lord Sannox, suavely. "Your note of Wednesday miscarried, and I have it here in my pocket-book. I took some pains in carrying out my idea. The wound, by the way, was from nothing more dangerous than my signet ring."

He glanced keenly at his silent companion, and cocked the small revolver which he held in his coat pocket. But Douglas Stone was still picking at the coverlet.

"You see you have kept your appointment after all," said Lord Sannox.

And at that Douglas Stone began to laugh. He laughed long and loudly. But Lord Sannox did not laugh now. Something like fear sharpened and hardened his features. He walked from the room, and he walked on tiptoe. The old woman was waiting outside.

"Attend to your mistress when she awakes," said Lord Sannox. Then he went down to the street. The cab was at the door, and the driver raised his hand to his hat.

"John," said Lord Sannox, "you will take the doctor home first. He will want leading downstairs, I think. Tell his butler that he has been taken ill at a case."

"Very good, sir."

"Then you can take Lady Sannox home."

"And how about yourself, sir?"

"Oh, my address for the next few months will be Hotel di Roma, Venice. Just see that the letters are sent on. And tell Stevens to exhibit all the purple chrysanthemums next Monday, and to wire me the result."

George Meredith.

By Anne Wakeman Lathrop.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.

IF you journey from London to pay your respects to Mr. Meredith, Box Hill is a nearer station than Dorking. The unpretentious cottage is within a mile of the station, where you are pretty sure to find a solitary fly in waiting for any chance traveller. The driver is rather uncertain as to where the distinguished author lives. He will probably say to you questioningly, "Ee writes books, don't ee?" Then cabby concludes he can find the house, which he does after several inquiries along the crooked road. Such is fame!

MR. MEREDITH'S HOUSE FROM THE ROAD.

You ring the bell. A snatch of opera song comes to your listening ears as you stand tiptoe on a huge stepping-stone near the gate and gaze up the inclined path to the house. A tall, slender gentleman appears, with a pale, delicate cameo face, and frosted hair and beard, and you have a haunting conviction that the face is a familiar one. Then you suddenly call to mind the elder Lytton, and dimly remember the reputed resemblance between the Lyttons and George Meredith.

All this time the gentleman with the belted grey Norfolk jacket has been slowly strolling towards the gate, and welcomes you cordially, as if he had always known you.

His voice is very sweet, well modulated, and magnetic. In anyone else the drawling tone would be an affectation, but in this case it seems appropriate to the man, who impresses you as mainly living in a world of which his listener is no part, yet thereby implying no rudeness to the guest. Mr. Meredith's eyes are alert, expressive, and keen, bespeaking the strong will that supports the bodily weakness, although tired lids fall over them, betokening spent physical forces.

He does not begin to converse with you, but continues to do so. He is gracious and graceful in all he says and does. Mr. Meredith is so much a courtier, he would be the same even to those he disliked, yet persons to whom he felt friendly would know it in some mysterious way. You have an idea that if he disliked anyone, he or she would feel like some luckless fly might, when invited to sit in the parlour of a wise spider.

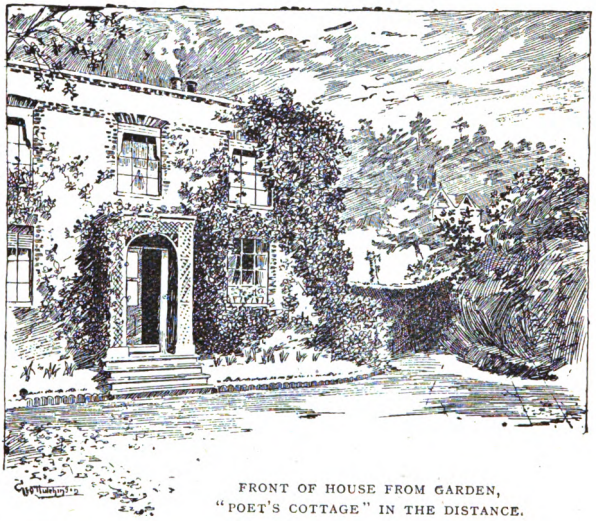
Mr. Meredith's study is in the garden. It consists of two rooms—a ground-floor one and an upper one. Of the former apartment, his two pet tan dachshunds are the present occupants. Mr. Meredith puts the grotesque canines through their various tricks, and then rewards each of them with a tiny lump of sugar. On entering the house, you are presented to the son and daughter of the novelist. The latter is a comely young lady of charming address, who has only just entered the bewildering world of London society. The son, a fine, manly young fellow, with his father's courtliness of manner, makes you at home directly in the little drawing-room.

Mr. Meredith is a widower, and has been twice married. His second wife was of Irish birth. Perhaps that is the reason "Diana of the Crossways" is represented as an Irish damsel. A sweet character—full face—looks down from a quaint gilded frame above the piano, and you wonder if this was the late Mistress Meredith.

The well-known author writes for three or four hours early in the day, and the limit of composition is from eleven to twelve hundred words. This is when he is working regularly, not every day in the year, for he takes frequent holidays. He writes rapidly, in a hand that seems at a distance illegible, but which on closer inspection is easy to decipher. When his day's work is done, he takes his manuscript to his daughter to copy for the publishers. In the afternoon, the busy author studies and translates from the classic writers. Sunday is a day of absolute rest, and such quiet entertaining of familiar friends as his strength permits

him to indulge. While in residence in Surrey, this is the routine day by day.

Mr. Meredith dines simply as to solid foods. This is due to ill-health rather than to inclination, for he has the tastes of an epicure. In the matter of wines he has an exceptionally dainty palate, and absorbs, sip by sip, favourite vintages of hock and champagne. He is never wearisome, and might, with all due respect and admiration, be described as delightfully garrulous. He is particular, however, to talk of subjects in which you are individually interested. Afterwards he launches forth on voyages of his own in the pleasant sea of discourse, carrying you with him as an interested passenger. He dominates the dinner table, and his sentences are marvellously apt. It is enough for him to feel that he has an appreciative listener. He stimulates your interest with his epigrams, enlivens you with occasional drolleries, and rests you with his ease and fluency of thought and expression.



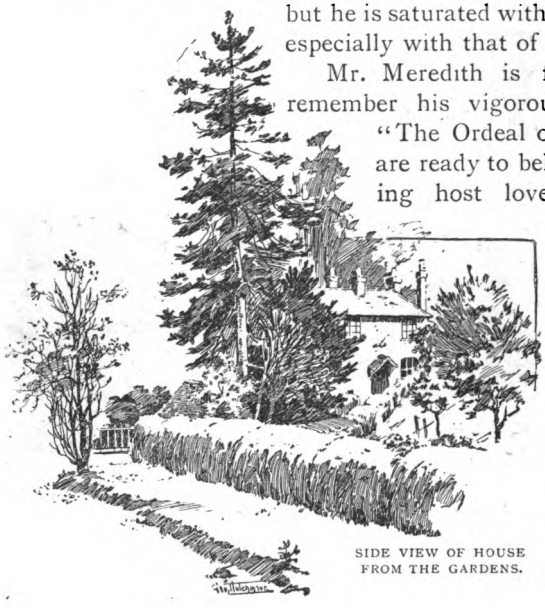
FRONT OF HOUSE FROM GARDEN, "POET'S COTTAGE" IN THE DISTANCE.

You find yourself wishing that he would always write as he talks. In his books, his style is often intricate and laboured. As regards this, however, he is an intentional offender. He believes that intricate thoughts are fitly expressed in intricate fashion; that a diamond of any appreciable value deserves a costly, elaborate setting.

Of all his works he best likes "The Shaving of Shagpat," but admits that the majority of his feminine readers prefer "Diana of the Crossways," while men like "The Egoist" better. He is rather uncommunicative as to the latter, and, when speaking of it, has a far-away look, that gently suggests to you not to pursue the subject. He frequently forms a character from a chance glimpse of an impressive figure walking along the road, or seated

in some crowded assemblage. Thus, he says, his fancy builds up the structure from the foundation hint of nature and art. A first delightful impression may be spoiled by a nearer acquaintance, while the child of the imagination never disappoints.

Mr. Meredith was trained in the law, but abandoned it for literature. He was born in Hampshire, and was partially educated in Germany. He readily converses on the country so dear to his youth, and grows enthusiastic about Italy, its climate, its paintings, its poetry, its music. The old tuneful Italian operas he delights in. Not only is he a thorough linguist, but he is saturated with the literature of nations, especially with that of Germany.



SIDE VIEW OF HOUSE FROM THE GARDENS.

Mr. Meredith is fond of children. You remember his vigorous sketches of boys in "The Ordeal of Richard Feveril," and are ready to believe that your entertaining host loves child-life, as he has already admitted that he loves the society of young people. With the appearance of after-dinner coffee in the drawing-room arrives a group of little girls and boys, with their mother. These small visitors range from eight to twelve years of age. Instantly you observe the gentlest side of Mr. Meredith's nature. He adapts himself to the children, with a mingling of man of the world polish, and frank, almost boyish, ingenuousness. He does not tower above them, but treats them like miniature men and women, and always with attentive gallantry. The effect on the children is to make them the more polite and earnest than is usual with childhood. A proposition is made by the little folk to be shown some wonderful red-berried bushes in an adjoining park, to which the Merediths have access. Alas! the key to the gate cannot be found. A disappointed maiden remarks tentatively, "We cannot go without the key." On this, Mr. Meredith makes a dance step, throws up his long, slim hands above his head, snaps his fingers as a sort

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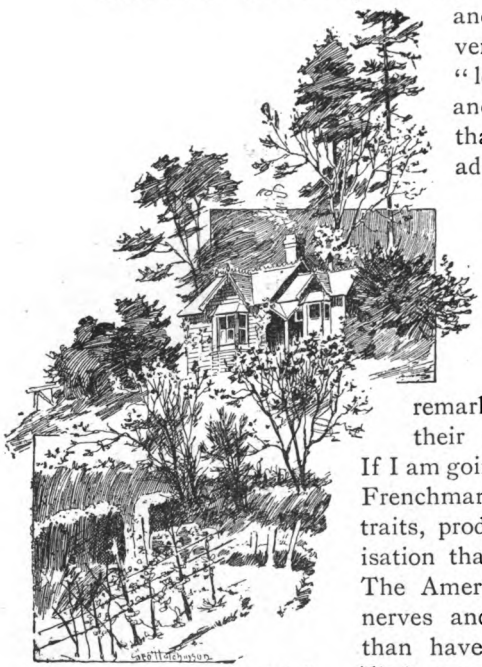
of castanet prelude, and improvises a brief comic ditty, of which the refrain runs, "But not without the key, says she, oh! not without the key." This so amuses the children that the song has to be repeated, while their rippling laughter fills all the room. Nor does Mr. Meredith forget to substitute some equally enjoyable treat for his young guests, to make up for their temporary disappointment.

That he knows women comprehensively no one will deny who reads him. His charity for their weaknesses is large and tender, and he is prone to idealise their very follies. He tells you that he "loves American institutions," and that he "adores the people," that is to say, the multitude. He adds, with a touch of half seriousness, that he "deplores titles." You hear much about America from Mr. Meredith. His somewhat late-in-life fame came largely at first in the land across the Atlantic.



"POET'S COTTAGE."

"Nations," Mr. Meredith remarks, "have an individuality, and their people salient characteristics. If I am going to meet an Irishman or a Frenchman, I know I shall find certain traits, product of the finer, nervous organisation that comes from the Celtic blood. The Americans, too, have a finer set of nerves and a more refined apprehension than have we. There lies their hope. Their organisation is more keen than ours. I discern it in some of their writings and in some of their methods. I foresee a great literary and artistic product there."

You are impressed with these views as you bid Mr. Meredith good-night, thanking him for the pleasure the visit to him has given you. He bows low over your hand, and replies, "Nay, the pleasure has been mine"; and this little tribute to personal vanity lingers on the memory as a dainty peroration to your musings on George Meredith.

The Burrawurra Brand.

By E. W. Hornung.

Illustrations by George Hutchinson.

THE Burrawurra run had many merits, but those of the homestead in the midst of it were few and adventitious. The site was central, certainly, for you might strike the boundary by riding out ten miles in any direction; and it was conspicuous, because, no matter what direction you chose, you had to cover at least three miles of open plain before finding shelter from the Riverina sun. Nor was there any shade at the homestead itself, save the clean-cut shadows of the various buildings. A crooked pine tree wasted in the station-yard, but only one; itself, and the whitewashed walls and beams and verandah posts surrounding it, were all that remained of the original clump. Above the whitewashed walls was an acre or two of galvanised iron in small allotments. So from a distance, the homestead greatly resembled a group of packing cases with tin lids, and in itself it did not attract. But old George Wade, who both owned and managed Burrawurra, made you glow before you got there, from the warmth of remembered welcomes and the certainty of a warm one in store; and Mrs. Wade was wonderfully glad to see you, for an invalid lady who had no business in the bush; and young George was a genial villain, but it was his sister that you went to see. For a white frock fluttering in the verandah at Burrawurra homestead was as a lighthouse light flashing over the

"HIS SISTER"

sea. Good eyes could discern it across miles of sand and salt-bush, and those that did so without delight were looking for the first time upon Pinkie Wade.

Not that Pinkie was a beauty; she was less than that, and also more. She was wiry and thin and rather tall, with the hand and stride of a man, and a smile more audacious than winning, though one was glad enough to have it just as it was. And her smile was all her own. It began in her eyes, cleverness was needed to know when, for these were so dark that there was no defining the pupils, which made their expression often inscrutable; and it ended in a gleaming show of teeth, just as it became very hard to stand away from her lips any longer. But the best has been said. Her colour was distinctly sallow. Her face was leaner than is looked for in a girl. She disfigured her forehead with a coal-black fringe, and her speech with a twang that nobody could admire. Sometimes she disfigured it much more dreadfully: once, at all events, she had been heard to use certain crisp expressions to some killing-sheep she had undertaken to pen, which being reported to her mother, Pinkie shed tears of penitence, but pleaded provocation. The tears were a rarity, and let us hope the cause was, too. Pinkie, however, showed tenderness at all times to her poor mother; but she had no tenderness for her admirers, of which she might have thought herself lucky to own one in the bush, instead of the four or five who would ride from ten to forty miles for the pleasure of being snubbed by her.

Yet she liked them much, and she liked them all, and when they came to her one at a time, she very nearly loved them each in turn, for each was good of his kind. There was Shaw, the Government Surveyor, who was very honest and pleasant and good-humoured, besides being as thoroughly colonial as Pinkie herself. There was young Hutton, the new chum at Yellow Plains, who was amusing because he was so very much in earnest. There was a Rabbit Inspector, with a good English name and a beautiful moustache, and a fallen angel's air of melancholy badness which Pinkie found more irresistible every time he came, and he was beginning to come very often. Then there was John Hartley, of Gunbar, and Gunbar is a finer station than Burrawurra, besides being John Hartley's own. He, too, was delightful, as a devotee twice her age generally is to a girl of twenty. The younger the man the less his chance, so in this case young Hutton had the least chance of them all, in spite of his pathetic mentionings of the money he had for investment, and of his preference for a

station life beyond all others. Even young Hutton, however, was good to see when none of the others came, for he was proud in his boyish way, and he had more imagination than the rest of them put together, and would talk better when alone with her. Any one of the four, in fact, was delightful by himself. But at last a malignant fate brought all four to Burrawurra on the same Saturday, and the result was extraordinary.

"JOHN HARTLEY."

It was the beginning of December and hot enough to grill chops in ten minutes on the verandah roof. This is on the authority of Pinkie Wade, who said it to her mother while placing an eau-de-Cologne pad on the poor lady's forehead, and fanning her afresh. Mrs. Wade always did fall ill at the commencement of the very hot weather, and she had fallen ill now while her husband was away buying horses. Pinkie was looking after her, and it was from her mother's window that she beheld John Hartley's buggy drive up, to her dismay. The interesting Inspector followed at three in the afternoon, and Shaw, the Surveyor, before five, when, as it grew cooler, Mrs. Wade actually came out to see her guests. She would not have them know how ill she was, nor did they guess. Such is the hospitality of the squatter and his wife.

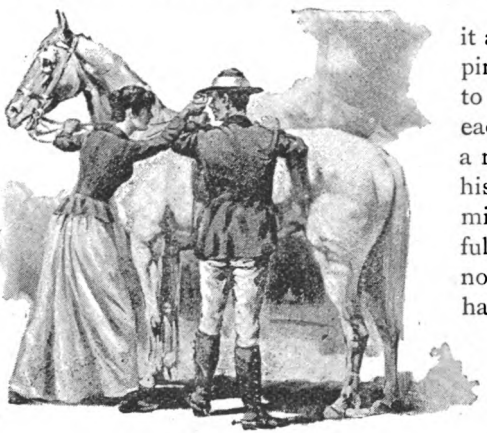
"JOHN HARTLEY'S BUGGY."

But Pinkie was extremely angry, and when young Hutton arrived, after a ride of five-and-twenty miles, in time for supper, she happened to be the first person he saw, and her anger broke loose. She told him what was the matter, and asked him, ridiculously, why on earth he had chosen this day of all days. His answer was to wheel round his horse as if to remount, whereupon Pinkie Wade seized the reins with one hand and snatched the spectacles from his nose with the other. He was a near-sighted new chum.

"What are you up to?" she cried, really angrily now.

"Let me go back," he answered doggedly, giving her a curious stare without his glasses, and holding out his hand for them. But Pinkie Wade fixed them on her own nose, and pretended that she could see him through them, with her head on one side.

"I'll let you *walk* back if you lose your temper!" she said, most unjustifiably. "You've to stay and amuse the others. I shan't see anything of you, so I hope you'll all keep out of mischief and not quarrel. You shall play tennis all day long to-morrow; you've to stay just to make up a four—otherwise you shouldn't. Here, take back the things, I can't see through 'em."



"SEIZED THE REINS."

And the smile ended as it always did, Hutton whipping on his glasses in time to see the last of it, and each dazzling tooth was as a new nail in the coffin of his peace of mind. But he might have rested in thankfulness and good hope. For not so familiarly would she have treated any of the others, and whatever familiarity may breed, it is itself bred by the kind of feelings that would have encouraged young Hutton had he divined them in Pinkie Wade.

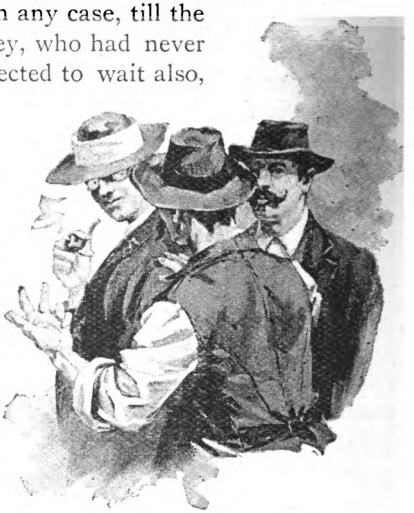
It was in his favour, however, that there were four of them to play lawn-tennis next day, without young Wade, who had things to see to; for in spite of his eyesight, Hutton was the best of the four; and in spite of Mrs. Wade's indisposition, which continued, Pinkie came out to watch the games. The play was not of a high order, certainly, but neither was she to know that. She did not pretend to know much about it. She merely saw the new chum from Yellow Plains repeatedly put the ball past the handsome Rabbit Inspector, who had gone to the devil before lawn-tennis was invented, and picked up his play in the infernal regions that had harboured him now for some years. His play was bad, and his temper turned out to be rather bad also; and when Pinkie discovered this, the fascination of a vaguer and more attractive kind of badness became cancelled for the time. She followed Hutton's good strokes with the most provoking applause, which

had the double effect of improving his play and demoralising that of the Inspector. But the Inspector was by no means a bad fellow in one sense of the term. The other Englishman's better play, and Pinkie Wade's vexatious plaudits, combined to irritate him at the moment, but he was perfectly good-natured in the evening. Good-natured also was the chaff that then went on, whereof fragments floated to Pinkie's ears. But she chose to think otherwise, because she could hear just enough to know that the new chum was the person who was being chaffed. The new chum always is that person. In most cases he merits all the chaff he gets. In most cases, also, he stands it charmingly, though chaff in the bush is a rusty rapier with a jagged blade. Hutton stood his as he was likely to stand it, coming as he did (and not so long since) from a public school. But Pinkie heard what she did hear with an absurd sense of indignation. She was just feminine enough to be hopelessly unfair in her judgment of others, and from that night her fallen angel was also her fallen idol. Nor was he ever picked up or put together again, though somebody did his best, for there are some things that women would never believe, though the Recording Angel signed an affidavit to their truth.

"THE NEW CHUM."

Nevertheless, the visitation of the four would at least have ended peacefully, and been given a decent burial in the mind of Pinkie Wade, but for a circumstance of pure chance, the like of which would not happen twice. On a station only one horse is stabled over-night—the night-horse—which is used for running up the others from the horse-paddock at break of day. When the four said good-night to Pinkie Wade, three of them made it good-bye, fully intending to be away before breakfast next morning; and the fourth, John Hartley, who was himself in no hurry, followed their example after a moment's hesitation, and in obedience to a sportsman-like instinct

which did him credit. But two horses were somehow missed by the man who ran up the rest; it turned out later that a fence was broken, and they had got adrift in another and a larger paddock; but the odd thing was that the missing two were the nags of young Hutton and the Inspector of rabbit-skins. The sun grew fierce, and these horses had not been found. Young George Wade persuaded the pair to stay, in any case, till the cool of the evening. John Hartley, who had never wanted to make an early start, elected to wait also, and Shaw, the Surveyor, who also was his own boss, naturally followed suit. Genial young Wade, who had work to do in a distant corner of the Burrawurra run, postponed that also until the blessed evening. So five healthy men were left with the thermometer already rising 110° in the shade and a long morning on their idle hands. And Satan was their man.

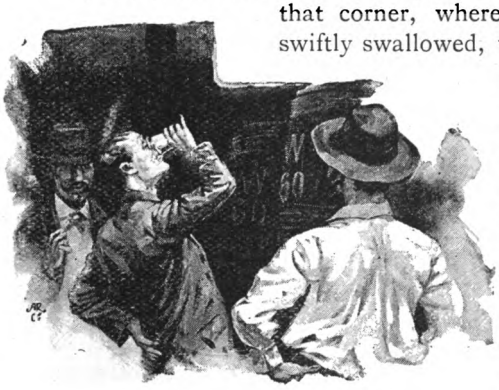


"PERSUADED THE PAIR TO STAY."

From whom the suggestion came, there is no saying at this distance of time. They were squatting in the store verandah, vagariously yarning, and it probably arose from talk concerning the late shearing. The suggestion was that they should all turn into the store and cut each other's hair, and it was carried by acclamation.

Now the store was a building by itself, and knew neither partitions nor subdivisions of any kind. It was a large, low, dingy-looking place, but roomy enough, in spite of its multifarious contents. These included all reasonable wants of the wilderness, stowed away on shelves, depending from the beams, or preserved in cases and barrels. Hutton noticed the stencil of the Burrawurra brand hanging from a nail, the Burrawurra brand being W over 60—W for Wade, and 60 for the sixty thousand sheep the station would carry in good seasons. He noticed it professionally, because he personally had wielded such another brand during the recent shearing at Yellow Plains. Later, the Burrawurra brand became horribly familiar to him. For it was painted in white on two casks that stood side by side in one corner of the store. One of these casks contained limejuice, the other whisky. A single

glass was found, and as each man rose with a cropped head from the victim's chair, the whole party adjourned, with the glass, to that corner, where whisky and limejuice was swiftly swallowed, with no allaying rain. This refreshment between the acts was really the inspiration of a naturally thirsty soul, the Inspector, but the new chum thought it was a custom of the bush. They told him that, and he believed it; there are stranger customs, if you come to think of it. Now the new chum disliked limejuice, and he was only beginning not to dislike whisky. Nor did he love the expedition with which he was made to toss off the fluid (because of the one glass only), although, indeed, he had no desire to let it trickle over his palate in a succession of drops. But he did love, more than most things, a custom of the bush; the phrase alone charmed him; and he drank more than once to the honour of the public schools, coupled with the names of Eton and Rugby, the Rabbit Inspector's school and his own



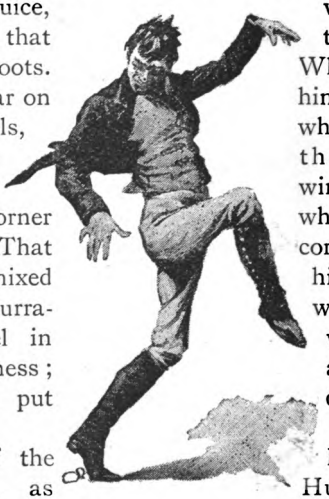
"WHISKY AND LIMEJUICE."

So it came to pass that when Pinkie came into the store at about half-past eleven, to say a word to her brother, she saw the hair of Hutton's head (which had not yet been cut) peeping over some sacks of flour. An instinct had made young Hutton hide. Another instinct, when the girl was

"AN INSTINCT HAD MADE YOUNG HUTTON HIDE."

gone—as he fancied, without seeing that he was there—made him desire to break away from the hair-cutting altogether. He said that he was going to see whether his horse had been run up yet, and if so he was off to Yellow Plains, as after all he had better get back there as soon as possible. The proposal was resisted, but young Hutton stood to his guns. It was a last stand; his horse was not yet in the yard. He returned to the store, for where else could he go? Pinkie's frock fluttered in the verandah of the main building, but yet another instinct told him that she would not receive him kindly at that moment. He concentrated his mind on walking back to the store as an arrow flies, and flattered himself that he entirely succeeded.

The third victim was shaking the hair from his winding sheet as young Hutton entered. He was in time for his ration of whisky and limejuice, which he stoutly refused. He said that the limejuice was getting into his boots. Whereupon pressure was brought to bear on him in the name of the public schools, which appealed to his pride. Once more the unholy blend made Hutton wince, as he tossed it off in the dark corner where the great twin barrels stood. That corner was so dark that each man mixed his own by guess-work, but the Burra-wurra brand grinned from each barrel in white paint that defied the darkness; and the grin broad-ened as Hutton put down his empty glass.



"STAMPED UPON THEM."

The order of the hair-cutting was *seniores priores*, as Hutton remarked with an unction which was accepted as a proof that he had really been at Rugby. Young Wade, from the chair, entreated a translation, which the new chum gave him with an adjectival freedom which was a proof, on the other hand, that he had also been some time in the bush. His turn came next (he was denied his turn as operator), and, as he began to feel, the sooner the better. But before it came, his spectacles fell from his nose, and he himself stamped upon them with ferocious mirth until the lenses were ground to powder. That obviously was the limejuice that was in his boots. At his next interview with the Burrawurra brand he was panting with excitement, but without

his glasses he could not see what he was doing, and the taps were stiff to turn. He is afraid he must have abused the Burrawurra brand, and the man who cut his hair is careful to make a point of it that he did.

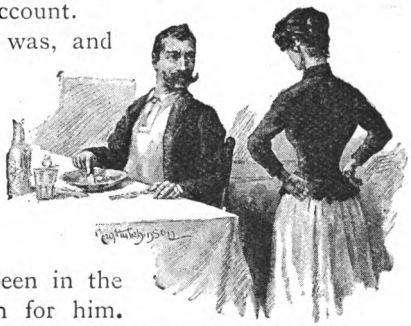
He knows that he fell asleep while his hair was being cut. The last thing he remembers hearing distinctly was the voice of John Hartley (who was preparing to go, and who was old enough not to have been there at all) saying that something was a shame. Also he felt something cold upon his neck besides the scissors. But he slept until they made him get up, having finished with him. They then asked him (as it seemed to him through telephones) how he felt as to the back of his head ; and he replied as to his feelings generally, with a candour that was admirable, though needless.

"Rugby," said the Rabbit Inspector, "you want another drink!"

"Eton," began Hutton—— And his language to the Etonian was thick in more senses than one.

Remember that this orgy was a morning performance. That is its sole claim to distinction. It was half-past twelve, with a shade temperature of 112° Fahrenheit, when the performers vacated the store in a body, leaving (like the sheep of Little Bo-peep, herself a squatter's daughter) their hair behind them. Nothing further occurred, save instances of how badly and well men may treat a man during one and the same hour. Hutton did nothing for some time to assist the story. But the story went forward at luncheon, and on his account.

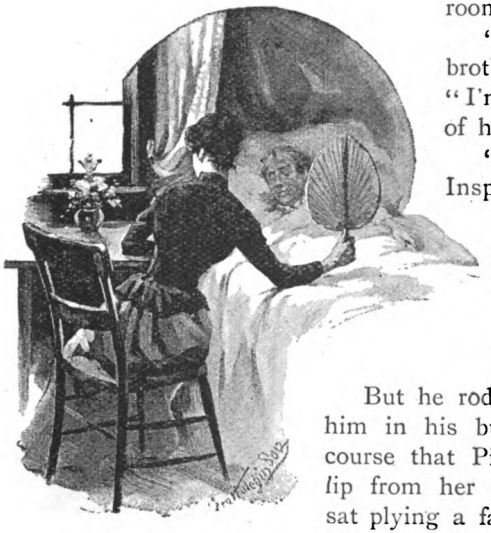
Pinkie Wade asked where he was, and fixed her black eyes upon the handsome Rabbit Inspector. Now the Inspector had a head on him like a lump of quartz, but this did not prevent him being in the best of humours, thanks to everything, and he answered airily that the new chum had been in the sun, which had proved too much for him. As the girl continued to stare at him very hard, he added that the thermometer stood at some hundreds in the shade.



"PINKIE ASKED WHERE HE WAS."

Then the Rabbit Inspector, who had been educated at Eton, received from Miss Wade of Burrawurra a reprimand which he

cannot have forgotten to this day, though he was the man to forgive it. She divined what had really happened, and spoke out with a moral fearlessness which the Inspector himself could not help admiring. John Hartley had gone, and she blamed the Inspector, and the Inspector only, with a fine injustice which had yet enough justice in it to make her charges impossible to answer. Her worst charge she kept to herself; it was so monstrously unfair that, had she uttered it, out of her own mouth would she have armed the Inspector for his self-defence. As it was he merely returned her stare—and his own was not free from dignity—while young Wade sat in stupid silence, and the Government Surveyor hung his head. The girl's words cut their dulled ears like knives, but the ears of the Inspector were not so dull, belonging, as they did, to a head of quartz. When she paused he bowed slightly; then he rose from his chair so abruptly that he knocked it over, but Pinkie Wade was nimbler, and she was out of the room before him.



"HER MOTHER SLEPT."

"Old man," gasped the girl's brother, finding his voice at last, "I'm—I'm damnably ashamed of her!"

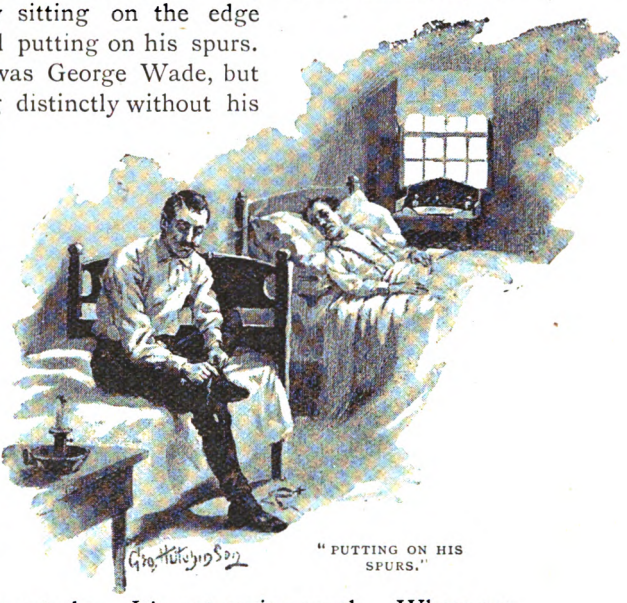
"My good fellow," replied the Inspector, who had at least gone to the devil a gentleman, "you ought to be proud of her. She was a bit rough, but between us we deserved every word, and, by God, she can hit out straight!"

But he rode away, and Shaw followed him in his buggy, steering an unsteady course that Pinkie watched with a curled lip from her mother's bedside, where she sat plying a fan with so gentle a hand that Mrs. Wade slept beneath the soft current of cool air.

Young Wade saw his friends off with a long face, and further apologies, which the Inspector again tossed back in his face. "She's a stunner," he said, as he rode away. But George could not see his sister in that light just then. He would have to face her later. It occurred to him to turn out Hutton's horse, which had been run up at last, so that at least he would have one man to

stand by him that night. But before night he had to perform the duty neglected in the morning; that duty called him to a distant quarter of the run; and before he could obey this call he felt it necessary, for many reasons, to lie down and sleep. So he went to his room, which Hutton was sharing with him because of the visitation of the four together, and lay down there.

When Hutton awoke, which was barely before sundown, he discovered somebody sitting on the edge of the other bed and putting on his spurs. He guessed that it was George Wade, but he could see nothing distinctly without his glasses; and when he felt for them he began to remember things. He lay still for some moments. The universe was inside his head, George Wade stood up, and his spurs tinkled on the floor.



"PUTTING ON HIS SPURS."

"Where are you going?" said Hutton.

"Hallo!" cried George. "How are you?"

"As fit as I deserve to be. It's not saying much. Where are you off to?"

George's answer brought Hutton into a bolt upright position on the bed. "Surely you aren't going to leave a fellow?" he said nervously. "Wait for me, and we'll start together."

"My dear boy, you're not going to-night," said young Wade, comfortably; "don't you believe it."

"I must!" cried Hutton, springing to his feet.

"Why must you? Anyway, you can't, because your horse isn't in yet," affirmed George Wade, unblushingly; "he's got through into a big paddock, and it'll take me to find him. I'll have a look for him this evening; I shan't be out so long."

"Shall you be back to supper?" asked Hutton wistfully.

"Well, no; I'm going to get a snack with a boundary-rider, who was expecting me this morning. I must go and see him to-night."

"Then I must go, too. Lend me a horse, George, for God's sake!"

"Why, man?"

"Because—I can't face—your sister. She'll know all about it!"

"She knows nothing," vowed the immoral George. "Even if she did, do you suppose it would matter?"

"Well, I shouldn't like to look her in the face again," said Hutton, and the touch of pride in his tone passed the other's comprehension. George, indeed, burst out laughing.

"My good chap, it's nothing new to her!" he cried, little knowing how it horrified Hutton to hear this. "She's seen it before. She's used to it. She wouldn't think any the worse of you. After all, you were only the worst of a bad lot; and she'll think you were the best, because she saw us others. We told her you'd been in the sun, and she believed it. Honour bright, she did! So cheer up, and don't be off your smoke when I get back; I promise I won't be late."

"DIPPED HIS HEAD IN COLD WATER."

Hutton looked into young Wade's eyes to see whether he was telling the truth, but his own were half blind for the want of glasses, and it was more natural to him at his age to believe than to disbelieve. He believed and gave in.

Hutton walked over to the stockyard with Wade, and saw the last of him, as George had seen the last of the others, but with an even longer face. George's last words were an inquiry after the back of Hutton's head. Hutton said it felt as though it had been very badly cropped, and George was laughing as he rode away in the gloaming. This young man had certainly no morals.

Poor Hutton went back to his room and dipped his head in cold water a great many times; between the times he made as elaborate a toilet as the contents of his valise would permit. The loss of his glasses was another handicap. But when he emerged into the open air he was looking really very sleek; his hair in front seemed nicely cut, though it was rather too wet; his coat was scrupulously

brushed. No sooner, however, was he in the station-yard, than his heart began knocking, for on the verandah outside the dining-room door he could see something white, and even without his spectacles he knew that it was Pinkie Wade. He stepped boldly forward, taking heart of what George had told him. But the moment he set foot in the verandah where she was, he knew that George had lied to him. He knew it from the way in which she rose from her chair as he drew near. He knew it from the tone of her voice, though she only said "Good evening" to him.

He leant against a verandah post, and tried to say more to her, and not to think of George. But it was very hard to find anything to say, and perhaps she purposely made it harder. Also, he had his thoughts, and his mind was steeped in remorse. Pinkie was in one of her snow-white frocks, whose purity made his own evil performance the more black and awful in his eyes. You see, he had ima-gination. It was one of the things she liked in him. But it was a thing that added much to his misery at this moment, for his thoughts flew to his own women-kind in England, while his eyes rested on Pinkie Wade, and he was young enough to wonder what they would have thought. . . . . But supper put an end to these specula-tions; only to give him a new lease of discom-fiture on still more embarrassing terms.

"LEANT AGAINST A VERANDAH POST."

For he and Pinkie had to face one another across the length of the cloth, so that he could hardly see her at all, and no other face was at the table. He had to carve for her, and this he managed to do in spite of his blindness; but having carved for himself also, he found himself quite unable to eat. His inability was conspicuous. Pinkie expressed a fear that the mutton was underdone, and proposed the cold joint. He said he did not think he could eat anything. He was foolish enough to add that he didn't know why, for Pinkie said promptly—

"I do!"

"I hope you don't," he cried, losing his head.

"Why, surely there is no disgrace in being overcome by the sun? That, they tell me, happened to you this morning. I was very sorry to hear it," Pinkie Wade said, sadly.

"You were sorry?" asked Hutton, wildly.

"I was grieved," she whispered.

He sprang to his feet, and history repeated itself, for he knocked over his chair in his nervous haste. He blundered to the door, and there turned round.

"You know what happened!" he blurted out. "I can't see your face, but I can tell that you know, from your voice. I am more ashamed of myself than I have ever been in my life before. But I won't ask you to forgive me, because I don't deserve to be forgiven!"

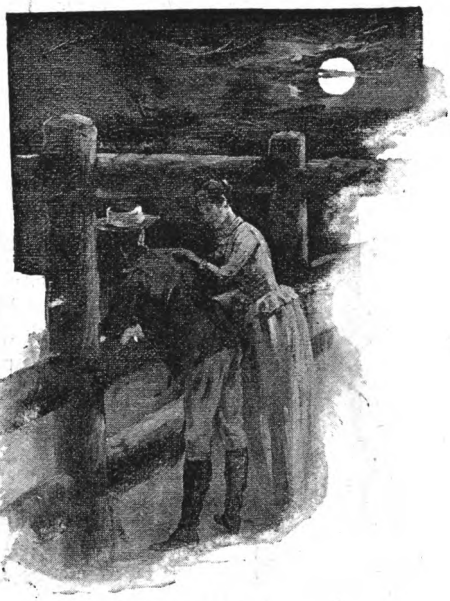
He looked towards her for a moment with shame and penitence, and the wistful yearning that comes into eyes that would but cannot see distinctly. In his, the girl thought that there were tears as well. But she liked him for being too proud to ask her forgiveness, and he was gone before she could be sure of the tears. Ere she had time to follow him to the door a mist had come before her own eyes, and for some moments she, too, could not see. She listened behind the door, and heard him go into his room at the other side of the station-yard. When he came out she wiped her eyes, and watched through the crack of the open door. He had his valise under his arm, and he disappeared in the direction of the stock-yard. Then Pinkie Wade began to wring her hands, and to vilify the poor Inspector whom lately she had inclined to worship.

"WIPED HER EYES, AND WATCHED."

"It was all your doing," she muttered viciously, "you brute! But I'll never look at you again—never! You thought I'd never look at *him* again, did you? Pooh, I have always liked him twice as well as you, though you are so fine and large, and now I know it. He's got to be forgiven, but *you* . . ."

The Rabbit Inspector troubled her thoughts no more just then; but her mind was made up about him for good and all. It

was one of those cases in which a woman condemns a man on strong circumstantial evidence; she always hangs him. Pinkie stepped forth into the station-yard, and smiled at the moon, which was rising over the roof that had just covered her. I don't say it was the case, but possibly her smile had to do with her own appearance in the white moonlight and that white dress. Conceivably, too, the frown that followed her smile was caused by the recollection that the new chum from Yellow Plains had either lost or broken his glasses. But these are deep waters. It is certain, on the other hand, that light steps now crossed the sandy tract dividing the cluster of tin-lidded buildings from the stock-yard; that they hesitated half-way, when a figure became visible leaning dejectedly through the stock-yard rails, with its back to the homestead; and that a few moments later this figure started and shivered as if an arrow had lodged between its shoulder-blades, instead of the finger of a girl.



WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?"

"What are you doing here?" the girl said.

"I'm waiting for my horse," replied the figure.

"Why, your horse won't be run up till morning!"

"I am waiting here till morning."

"But why?" she asked him, with genuine concern; and then he turned upon her with his hungry eyes, and she recoiled from him.

"Because I have made a disgrace and a fool of myself," he cried bitterly; "because I have made a beast of myself in your house, and abused your hospitality, so that I will never set foot here again! This is the brutal English of it; I'll ask your pardon for the English, if you like; but never for what is unpardonable. Here I stick till I get my horse. Then I am off, and you will never see me any more!"

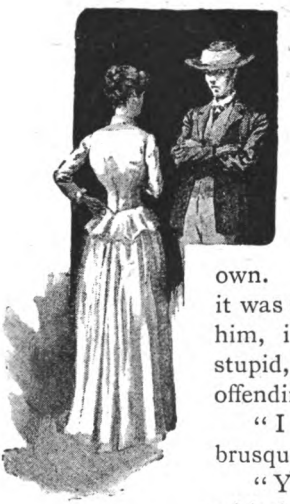
To her his pride seemed splendid; it did not occur to her that a proper pride would have been proud before the event. She was a little unsophisticated with all her arts.

"I think it very unkind of you to say that," she said, dolefully. "I—we all—like you very much."

"Then you will have the goodness to hate me this instant," cried Hutton, vigorously. "If you knew how I hate myself!" he added, in his misery.

"That's absurd. . . After all—perhaps we're savages—but it isn't such a very out-of-the-way thing up in these parts. . . And then, you know, it wasn't your fault!"

Until she said this, he was softening. He was closer to her than he realised, because his only desire was to see her plainly once more, and his sight was very short without his glasses. He was feasting his eyes on hers until she told him it was not his fault. At that he flung himself upright with a gesture of indignation.



"HE FLUNG HIMSELF UPRIGHT."

"Don't say that," he said sharply. "It *was* my fault. Nobody else was in the least to blame. Such things are only one man's fault, or else he is not a man at all!"

She did not agree with him. But she did like his pride more and more until she was beginning to love it, and to lose her own. For now her hand lay lightly on his arm—it was a firm arm, though lean—and she was telling him, in a voice that trembled, not to be an old stupid, but to come back to the house instead of offending them all.

"I care nothing about the others," he said brusquely. "I have offended myself—and you!"

"You care nothing about me," she whispered, with her eyes once more close to his, and burning into them. "You care only about yourself. I am nobody."

"You are everybody."

"How can I believe you?"

His eyes melted into hers, and at last his arms showed her how she might believe him. . . And that is the end of this discreditable episode, save that one of Pinkie's hands, not knowing what to do with itself, caressed the back of his head. Whereupon she broke away from him crying—

"Turn round, and let me look at you."

He turned round.

"Take off your hat and throw back your head."

He did both. She had made him turn his back to the moon as well as to her. Suddenly he saw her shadow bobbing up and down on the sand in front of him. She was laughing alarmingly.

"What on earth's the matter with you?" cried Hutton, facing about: and it is lamentable to note the difference in his tone to her at this early stage of their engagement, which was just three minutes old.

"Who cut your hair?" demanded Pinkie Wade.

"That's mentioning what we were never to mention again, and—and I really couldn't tell you."

"You poor boy! It doesn't much matter who he was, or whether he used the stencil or not. But the Burrawurra brand is W over 6o, and he's cut it in your back-hair as plain as ever I saw it on a bale o' wool!"

'THE BURRAWURRA BRAND!"

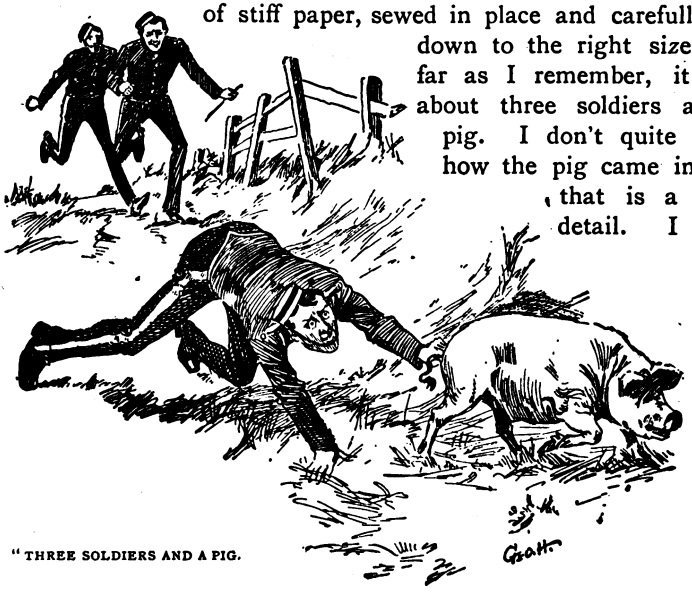
"JOHN STRANGE WINTER."

My First Book.

By "John Strange Winter" (Mrs. Stannard).

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson and Sydney Cowell.

MY first book—as ever was—was written, or, to speak quite correctly, was printed on the nursery floor some thirty odd years ago. I remember the making of the book very well; the leaves were made from an old copybook, and the back was a piece of stiff paper, sewed in place and carefully cut down to the right size. So far as I remember, it was about three soldiers and a pig. I don't quite know how the pig came in, but that is a mere detail. I have



"THREE SOLDIERS AND A PIG.

no data to go upon (as I did not dream thirty years ago that I should ever be so known to fame as to wish to write the true history of my first book for *The Idler*), but I have a wonderful memory, and to the best of my recollection, it was, as I say, about three soldiers and a pig.

It never saw the light, and there are times when I feel thankful to a gracious Providence that I have been spared the power of gratifying the temptation to give birth to those early efforts, after the manner of Sir Edwin Landseer and that pathetic little childish drawing of two sheep, which is to be seen at provincial exhibitions of pictures, for the encouragement and example of the rising generation.

So far as I can recall, I made no efforts for some years to woo fickle fortune after the attempt to recount the story of the three soldiers and a pig; but when I was about fourteen my heart was fired by the example of a schoolfellow, one Josephine H——, who spent a large portion of her time writing stories, or, as our schoolmistress put it, wasting time and spoiling paper. All the same, Josephine H——'s stories were very good, and I have often wondered since those days whether she, in after life, went on with her favourite pursuits. I have never heard of her again except once, and then somebody told me that she had married a clergyman, and lived at West Hartlepool. Yes, all this has something to do, and very materially, with the story of my first book. For in emulating Josephine H——, whom I was very fond of, and whom I admired immensely, I discovered that I could write myself, or at least that I wanted to write, and that I had ideas that I wanted to see on paper. Without that gentle stimulant, however, I might never have found out that I might one day be able to do something in the same way myself.

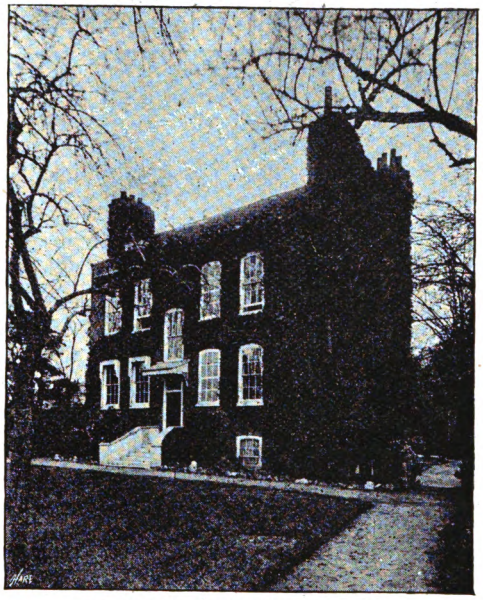
My next try was at a joint story—a story written by three girls, myself and two friends. That was in the same year. We really made considerable headway with that story; and had visions of completely finishing it and getting no less a sum than thirty pounds for it. I have a sort of an idea that I supplied most of the framework for the story, and that the elder of my collaborators filled in the millinery and the love-making. But alas! for the futility of human hopes and desires, that book was destined never to be finished, for I had a violent quarrel with my collaborators, and we have never spoken to each other from that day to this.

So came to an untimely end my second serious attempt at writing a book; for the stories that I had written in emulation of Josephine H—— were only short ones, and were mostly unfinished.

I wasted a terrible deal of paper between my second try and my seventeenth birthday, and I believe that I was, at that time, one of the most hopeless trials of my father's life. He many times offered to provide me with as much cheap paper as I liked to have, but cheap paper did not satisfy my artistic soul, for I always liked the best of everything. Good paper was my weakness—as it was his—and I used it, or wasted it, which you will, with just the same lavish hand as I had done aforetime.

When I was seventeen, I did a skit on a little book called

"How to Live on Sixpence a Day." It was my first soldier story—excepting the original three soldiers and a pig—and introduced the "sixpence a day" pamphlet into a smart cavalry regiment, whose officers were in various degrees of debt and difficulty, and every man was a barefaced portrait, without the smallest attempt at concealment of his identity. Eventually this sketch was printed in a York paper, and the honour of seeing myself in print was considered enough reward for me. I, on the contrary, had no such pure love of fame. I had done what I considered a very smart sketch, and I thought it well worth payment of some kind, which it certainly was.



MRS. STANNARD'S HOUSE AT MERTON.

After this, I spent a year abroad, improving my mind—and I think, on the whole, it will be best to draw a veil over that portion of my literary history, for I went out to dinner on every possible occasion, and had a good time generally. Stay—did I not say my literary history? Well, that year had a good deal to do with my literary history, for I wrote stories most of the time, during a large part of my working hours and during the whole of my spare time, when I did not happen to be going out to dinner. And when I came home, I worked on just the same until, towards the end of '75, I drew blood for the first time. Oh, the joy of that first bit of money—my first earnings! And it was but a bit, a mere scrap. To be explicit, it amounted to ten shillings. I went and bought a watch on the strength of it—not a very costly affair; a matter of two pounds ten and an old silver turnip that I had by me. It was wonderful how that one half-sovereign opened up my ideas. I looked into the future as far as eye could see, and I saw myself

carning an income—for at that time of day I had acquired no artistic feelings at all, and I genuinely wanted to make name and fame and money—I saw myself a young woman who could make a couple of hundred pounds from one novel, and I gloried in the prospect.

I disposed of a good many stories in the same quarter at starvation prices, ranging from the original ten shillings to thirty-five. Then, after a patient year of this not very luxurious work, I made a step forward and got a story accepted by the dear old *Family Herald*. Oh, yes, this is really all relevant to my first book; very much so, indeed, for it was through Mr. William Stevens, one of the proprietors of the *Family Herald*, that I learned to know the meaning of the word "caution"—a word absolutely indispensable to any young author's vocabulary.

MR. ARTHUR STANNARD.

At this time, I wrote a great deal for the *Family Herald*, and also for various magazines, including *London Society*. In the latter, my first "Winter" work appeared—a story called "A Regimental Martyr."

I was very oddly placed at this point of my career, for I liked most doing the "Winter" work, but the ordinary young-lady-like fiction paid me so much the best, that I could not afford to give it up. I was, like all young magazine writers, passionately desirous of appearing in book-form. I knew not a single soul in the way connected with literary matters, had absolutely no help or interest of any kind to aid me over the rough places, or even of whom to ask advice in times of doubt and difficulty. Mr. William Stevens was the only editor that I knew to whom I could go and say, "Is this right?" or "Is that wrong?" And I think it may be interesting to say here that I have never asked for, or indeed used, a letter of introduction in my life—that is, in connection with any literary business.

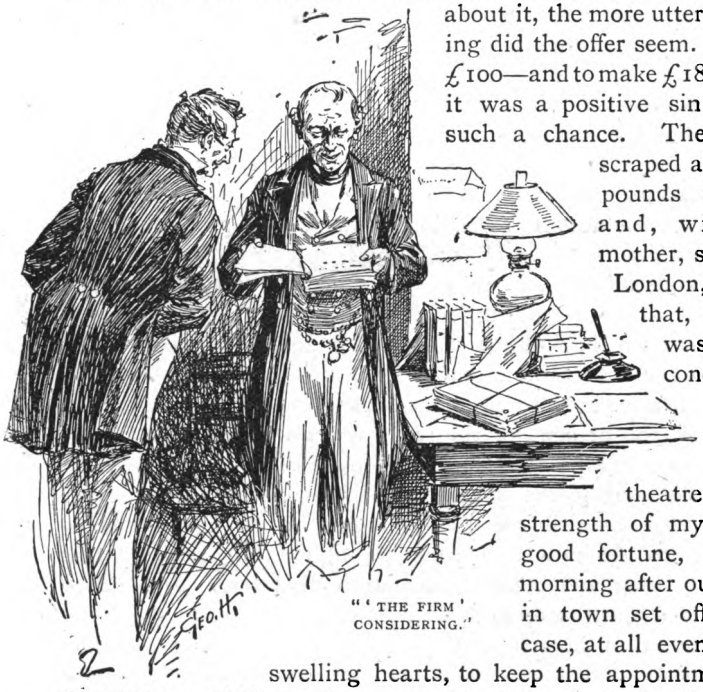
Well, when I had been hard at work for several years, I wrote a very long book—upon my word, in spite of my good memory, I

forget what it was called. The story, however, lives in my mind well enough; it was the story of a very large family—about ten girls and boys, who all made brilliant marriages and lived a sort of shabby, idyllic, happy life, somewhat on the plan of "God for us all and the devil take the hindermost." Need I say that it was told in the first person and in the present tense, and that the heroine was anything but good-looking?

I was very young then, and thought a great deal of my pretty bits of writing and those seductive scraps of moralising, against which Mr. Stevens was always warning me. Well, this very long, not to say spun out, account of this very large family of boys and girls, did not happen to please the "readers" for the *Family Herald*—then my stay-by—so I thought I would have a try round the various publishers and see if I could not get it brought out in three volumes. Of course, I tried all the best people first, and very often, when I receive from struggling young authors (who know a great deal more about my past history than I do myself, and who frequently write to ask me the best and easiest way to get on at novel-writing, without either hard work, or waiting, or disappointment, because, if you please, my own beginnings were so singularly successful and delightful) the information that I have never known of any of their troubles, it seems to me that my past and my present cannot be the past and present of the same woman. Yet they are. I went through it all; the same sickening disappointments, the same hopes and fears; I trod the self-same path that every beginner must assuredly tread, as we must all in time tread that other path to the grave. I went through it all, and with that exceedingly long and detailed account of that large and shabby family, I trod the thorny path of publishing almost to the bitter end—aye, even to the goal where we find the full-blown swindler waiting for us, with bland looks and honeyed words of sweetest flattery. Dear, dear, many who read this will know the process. It seldom varies. First, I sent my carefully-written MS., whose very handwriting betrayed my youth, to a certain firm which had offices off the Strand, to be considered for publication. The firm very kindly did consider it, and their consideration was such that they made me an offer of publication—*on certain terms.*

Their polite note informed me that their readers had read the work and thought very highly of it, that they were inclined—just by the way of completing their list for the approaching September, the best month in the year for bringing out novels—to bring it

out, although I was, as yet, unknown to fame. Then came the first hint of "the consideration," which took the form of a hundred pounds, to be paid down in three sums, all to fall due before the day of publication. I worked out the profits which *could* accrue if the entire edition sold out. I found that, in that case, I should have a nice little sum for myself of £180. Now, no struggling young author in his or her senses, is silly enough to throw away the chance of making £180, in one lump. I thought, and I thought the whole scheme out, and I must confess that the more I thought about it, the more utterly tempting did the offer seem. To risk £100—and to make £180. Why, it was a positive sin to lose such a chance. Therefore, I scraped a hundred pounds together, and, with my mother, set off for London, feeling that, at last, I was going to conquer the world. We did a theatre on the strength of my coming good fortune, and the morning after our arrival in town set off—in my case, at all events—with swelling hearts, to keep the appointment with the kindly publisher, who was going to put me in the way of making fame and fortune.



"'THE FIRM' CONSIDERING."

I opened the door and went in. "Is Mr. —— at home?" I asked. I was forthwith conducted to an inner sanctum, where I was received by the head of the firm himself. Then I experienced my first shock—he squinted! Now, I never could endure a man with a squint, and I distrusted this man instantly. You know, there are squints and squints! There is the soft uncertain squint feminine, which is really charming. And there is a particular obliquity of vision which, in a man, rather gives a larky expression,

and so makes you feel that there is nothing prim and formal about him, and seems to put you on good terms at once.

And there is a cold-blooded squint, which makes your flesh creep, and which, when taken in connection with business, brings little stories to your mind—"Is anyone coming, sister Anne?" and that sort of thing.

Mr. —— asked me to excuse him a moment while he gave some instructions, and without waiting for my permission, looked through a few letters, shouted a message down a speaking-tube, and then, after having arranged the fate of about half a dozen novels by the means of the same instrument, he sent a final message down the tube asking for my MS., only to be told that he would find it in the top right-hand drawer of his desk.

"HE SQUINTED!"

As a matter of fact, all this delay, intended to impress me and make me understand what a great thing had happened to me, in having won attention from so busy a man, simply did for Mr. —— so far as I was concerned. Instead of impressing me, it gave me time to get used to the place, it gave me time to look at Mr. —— when he was not looking at me.

Then, having found the MS., he looked at me and prepared to give me his undivided attention.

"Well," he said, with a long breath, as if it was quite a relief to see a new face, "I am very glad you have decided to close with our offer. We confidently expect a great success with your book. We shall have to change the title though. There's a good deal in a title."

I replied modestly that there was a good deal in a title. "But," I added, "I have not closed with your offer—on the contrary, I——"

He looked up sharply, and he squinted worse than ever. "Oh, I quite thought that you had definitely——"

"Not at all," I replied; then added a piece of information, which could not by any chance have been new to him. "A hundred pounds is a lot of money, you know," I remarked.

Mr. —— looked at me in a meditative fashion. "Well, if you have not got the money," he said, rather contemptuously, "we might make a slight reduction—say, if we brought it down to £75, solely because our "readers" have spoken so highly of the story. Now look here, I will show you what our reader says—which is a favour that we don't extend to everyone, that I can tell you. Here it is!"

MISS STANNARD.

Probably in the whole of his somewhat chequered career as a publisher, Mr. —— never committed such a fatal mistake as by handing me the report on my history (in detail) of that very large family of boys and girls. "Bright, crisp, racy," it ran. "Very unequal in parts, wants a good deal of revision, and should be entirely re-written. Would be better if the story was brought to a conclusion when the heroine first meets with the hero after the parting, as all the rest forms an anti-climax. This might be worked up into a really popular novel, especially as it is written very much in Miss ——'s style" (naming a then popular authoress whose sole merit consisted in being the most faithful imitator of the gifted founder of a very pernicious school).

I put the sheet of paper down, feeling very sick and ill. And the worst of it was, I knew that every word of it was true. I was young and inexperienced then, and had not *nous* enough to say plump out that my eyes had been opened, and that I could see that I should be neither more nor less than a fool if I wasted a single farthing over a story that must be utterly worthless. So I prevaricated mildly, and said that I certainly did not feel inclined to throw a hundred or even seventy-five pounds away over a story without some certainty of success. "I'll think it over during the day," I said, rising from my chair.

"Oh, we must know within an hour, at the outside," Mr. —— said very curtly. "Our arrangements will not wait, and the time is very short now for us to decide on our books for September. Of course, if you have not got the money, we might reduce a little more. We are always glad, if possible, to meet our clients."

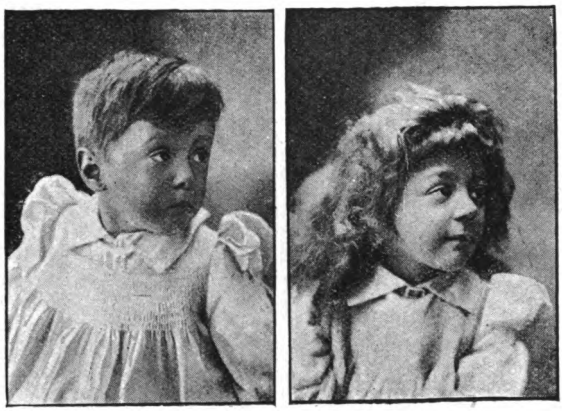
"It's not that," I replied, looking at him straight. "I have the money in my pocket; but a Yorkshire woman does not put down a hundred pounds without some idea what is going to be done with it."

"You must let me have your answer within an hour," Mr.—— remarked briefly.

"I will," said I, in my most polite manner; "but I really must think out the fact that you are willing to knock off twenty-five pounds at one blow. It seems to me if you could afford to take that much off, and perhaps a little more, there must have been something very odd about your original offer."

"My time is precious," said Mr.—— in a grumpy voice.

"Then, good morning," said I cheerfully.



"THE TWINS."

My hopes were all dashed to the ground again, but I felt very cheerful, nevertheless. I trotted round to my friend, Mr. Stevens, who gave a whistle of astonishment at my story. "I'll send my head clerk round for your MS. at once," he said, "else you'll probably never see it again."

And so he did, and so ended my next attempt to bring out my first book.

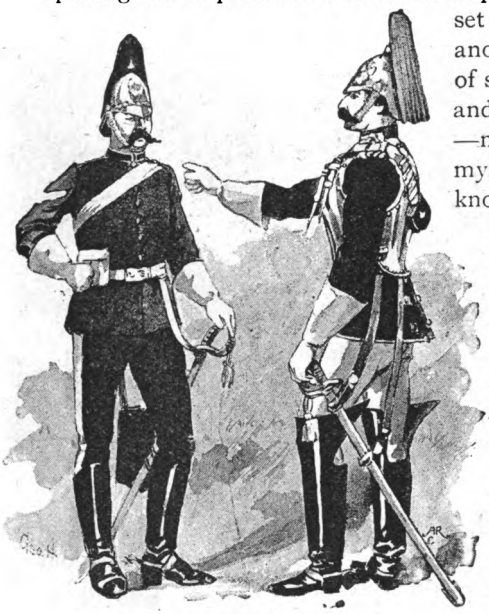
After this I felt very keenly the real truth of the old saying, "Virtue is its own reward." For, not long after my episode with Mr. ——, the then editor of *London Society* wrote to me, saying that he thought that as I had already had several stories published in the magazine, it might make a very attractive volume if I could add a few more and bring them out as a collection of soldier stories.

I did not hesitate very long over this offer, but set to work with all the enthusiasm of youth—and youth does have the advantage of being full of the fire of enthusiasm, if of nothing else—and I turned out enough new stories to make a very respectable volume.

Then followed the period of waiting to which all literary folk must accustom themselves.

I was, however, always of a tolerably long-suffering disposition, and possessed my soul in patience as well as I could. The next thing I heard was that the book had very good prospects, but that it would have its chances greatly improved if it were in two volumes instead of being in only one.

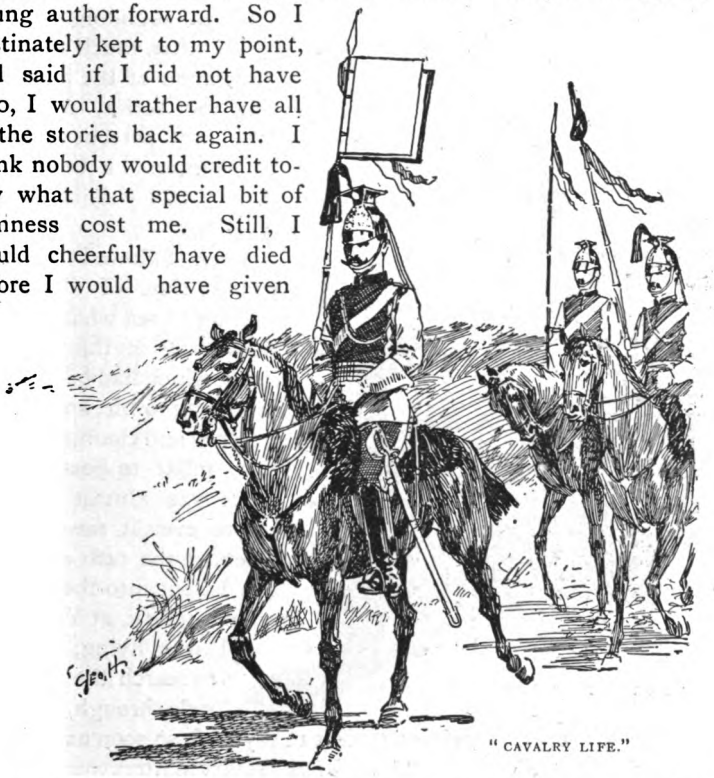
Well, youth is generous, and I did not see the wisdom of spoiling the ship for the traditional ha'porth of tar, so I cheerfully set to work and evolved another volume of stories, all of smart, long-legged soldiers, and with—as Heaven knows—no more idea of setting myself up as possessing all knowledge about soldiers and the Service than I had of aspiring to the Crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. But, even then, I had need of a vast amount of patience, for time went on, and really my book seemed as far from publication as ever. Every now and then I had a letter telling me that the arrangements were nearly completed, and that it would probably be brought out by Messrs. So-and-so. But days wore into weeks, and weeks into months, until I really began to feel as if my first literary babe was doomed to die before it was born.



'LONG-LEGGED SOLDIERS."

Then arose a long haggle over terms, which I had thought were settled, and to be on the same terms as the magazine rates—no such wonderful scale after all. However, my literary guide,

philosopher, and friend thought, as he was doing me the inestimable service of bringing me out, that £20 was an ample honorarium for myself; but I, being young and poor, did not see things in the same light at all. Try as I would—and I cannot lay claim to trying very hard—I could not see why a man, who had never seen me, should have put himself to so much trouble out of a spirit of pure philanthropy, and a desire to help a struggling young author forward. So I obstinately kept to my point, and said if I did not have £30, I would rather have all of the stories back again. I think nobody would credit to-day what that special bit of firmness cost me. Still, I would cheerfully have died before I would have given



"CAVALRY LIFE."

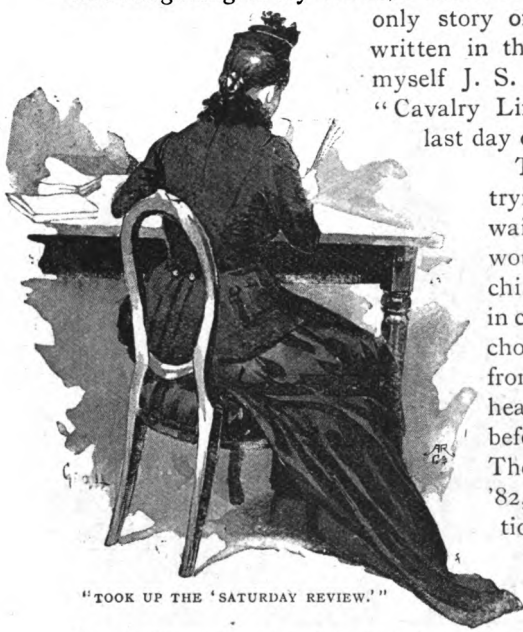
in, having once conceived my claim to be a just one. A bad habit on the whole, and one that has since cost me dear more than once.

Eventually, my guide and I came to terms for the sum for which I had held out, namely, £30, which was the price I received for my very first book, in addition to about £8 that I had already had from the magazine for serial use of a few of the stories.

So, in due course, my book, under the title of "Cavalry Life," was brought out in two great cumbersome volumes by Messrs.

Chatto & Windus, and I was launched upon the world as a full-blown author under the name of "Winter."

So many people have asked me why I took that name, and how I came to think of it, that it will not, perhaps, be amiss if I give the reason in this paper. It happened like this. During our negotiations, my guide suggested that I had better take some *nom de guerre*, as it would never do to bring out such a book under a woman's name. "Make it as real-sounding and non-committing as you can," he wrote, and so, after much cogitation and cudgelling of my brains, I chose the name of the hero of the only story of the series, which was written in the first person, and called myself J. S. Winter. I believe that "Cavalry Life" was published on the last day of '81.



"TOOK UP THE 'SATURDAY REVIEW.'"

Then followed the most trying time of all—that of waiting to see what the press would say of this, my first child, which had been so long in coming to life, and had been chopped and changed, bundled from pillar to post, until my heart was almost worn out before ever it saw the light. Then, on the 14th of January, '82, I went into the Subscription Library, at York, where I was living, and began to search the new journals through, in but faint hopes, however, of seeing a review of my book so soon as that; for I was quite alone in the world, so far as literary matters went. Indeed, not one friend did I possess who could in any way influence my career, or obtain the slightest favour for me.

I remember that morning so well; it is, I think, printed on my memory as the word "Calais" was on the heart of Queen Mary. It was a fine, cold morning, and there was a blazing fire in the inner room, where the reviews were kept. I sat down at the table, and took up the *Saturday Review*, never dreaming for a moment that I should be honoured by so much as a mention in a journal which I held in such awe and respect. And as I turned over the

leaves, my eyes fell on a row of foot-notes at the bottom of the page, giving the names of the books which were noticed above, and among them I saw—"*Cavalry Life; by J. S. Winter.*"

For full ten minutes I sat there, feeling sick and more fit to die than anything else. I was perfectly incapable of looking at the notice above. But, at last, I plucked up courage to meet my fate, very much as one summons up courage to have a tooth out, and get the horrid wrench over. Judge of my surprise and joy when, on reading the notice, I found that *The Saturday* had given me a rattling good notice, praising the new author heartily and without stint. I shall never, as long as I live, forget the effect of that, my first review, upon me. For quite half an hour I sat without moving, only feeling, "I shall never be able to keep it up. I shall never be able to follow it up by another." I felt paralysed, faint, crushed, anything but elated and jubilant. And, at last, through some instinct, I put my hand up to my head to find that it was cold and wet, as if it had been dipped in the river. Thank Heaven, from that day to this, I have never known what a cold sweat was. It was my first experience of such a thing, and sincerely I hope it will be my last.

The King of Schnorrers.

By I. Zangwill.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.

IV.

Showing how the Royal Wedding was arranged.

MANASSEH Bueno Barzillai Azevedo da Costa was so impressed by his would-be son-in-law's last argument that he perpended it in silence for a full minute. When he replied, his tone showed even more respect than had been infused into it by the statement of the aspirant's income. Manasseh was not of those to whom money is a fetish; he regarded it merely as something to be had for the asking. It was intellect for which he reserved his admiration. That was strictly not transferable.

"It is true," he said, "that if I yielded to your importunities and gave you my daughter, you would thereby have approved yourself a king of *Schnorrers*, of a rank suitable to my daughter's, but an analysis of your argument will show that you are begging the question."

"Vat more proof do you vant of my begging powers?" demanded Yankele, spreading out his palms and shrugging his shoulders.

"Much greater proof," replied Manasseh. "I ought to have some instance of your powers. The only time I have seen you try to *schnorr* you failed."

"Me! ven?" exclaimed Yankele indignantly.

"Why, this very night. When you asked young Weinstein for his dead father's clothes!"

"But he had already given them away!" protested the Pole.

"What of that? If anyone had given away *my* clothes, I should have demanded compensation. You must really be above rebuffs of that kind, Yankele, if you are to be my son-in-law. No, no, it is written, 'To give your daughter to an uncultured man is like throwing her bound to a lion.'"

"But you have also seen me *schnorr* vid success," remonstrated the suitor.

"Never!" protested Manasseh vehemently.

"Often!"

"From whom?"

"From you!" said Yankele boldly.

"From *me!*" sneered Manasseh, accentuating the pronoun with infinite contempt. "What does that prove? I am a generous man. The test is to *schnorr* from a miser."

"I *vill schnorr* from a miser!" announced Yankele desperately.

"You will!"

"Yes. Choose your miser."

"No, I leave it to you," said da Costa politely.

"Vell, Sam Lazarus, de butcher shop!"

"No, not Sam Lazarus, he once gave a *Schnorrer* I know elevenpence."

"Elevenpence?" incredulously murmured Yankele.

"Yes, it was the only way he could pass a shilling. It wasn't bad, only cracked, but he could get no one to take it except a *Schnorrer*. He made the man give him a penny change though. 'Tis true the man afterwards laid out the shilling at Lazarus's shop. Still a really great miser would have added that cracked shilling to his hoard rather than the perfect penny."

"'VAT MORE PROOF DO YOU VANT?'"

"No," argued Yankele, "dere vould be no difference, since he does not spend."

"True," said da Costa reflectively, "but by that same token a miser is not the most difficult person to tackle."

"How do you make dat out?"

"Is it not obvious? Already we see Lazarus giving away elevenpence. A miser who spends nothing on himself may, in exceptional cases, be induced to give away something. It is the man who indulges himself in every luxury and gives away nothing who is the hardest to *schnorr* from. He has a *use* for his money—himself! If you diminish his store you hurt him in the tenderest part—you rob him of creature comforts. To *schnorr* from

such a one I should regard as a higher and nobler thing than to *schnorr* from a mere miser."

"Vell, name your man."

"No—I couldn't think of taking it out of your hands," said Manasseh again with his stately bow. "Whomever you select I will abide by. If I could not rely on your honour, would I dream of you as a son-in-law?"

"Den I vill go to Mendel Jacobs, of Mary Axe."

"Mendel Jacobs—oh, no! Why he's married! A married man cannot be entirely devoted to himself."

"Vy not? Is not a vife a creature comfort? P'raps also she comes cheaper dan a housekeeper."

"We will not argue it. I will not have Mendel Jacobs."

"Simon Kelutski, de vine-merchant."

"He! He is quite generous with his snuff-box. I have myself been offered a pinch. Of course I did not accept it."

Yankele selected several other names, but Manasseh barred them all. At last da Costa had an inspiration.

"Isn't there a Rabbi in your community whose stinginess is proverbial? Let me see, what's his name?"

"A Rabbi!" murmured Yankele disingenuously, while his heart began to palpitate with alarm.

"Yes, isn't there—Rabbi Bloater!"

Yankele shook his head. Ruin stared him in the face—his fondest hopes were crumbling.

"I know it's some fishy name—Rabbi Haddock—no it isn't. It's Rabbi Remorse something."

Yankele saw it was all over with him.

"Perhaps you mean Rabbi Remorse Red-herring," he said feebly, for his voice failed him.

"Ah, yes! Rabbi Remorse Red-herring," said Manasseh. "From all I hear—for I have never seen the man—a king of guzzlers and topers, and the meanest of mankind. Now if you could dine with *him* you might indeed be called a king of *Schnorrers*."

Yankele was pale and trembling. "But *he* is married!" he urged, with a happy thought.

"Dine with him to-morrow," said Manasseh inexorably. "He fares extra royally on the Sabbath. Obtain admission to his table, and you shall be admitted into my family."

"But you do not know the man—it is impossible!" cried Yankele.

"That is the excuse of the bad *Schnorrer*. You have heard my ultimatum. No dinner, no wife. No wife—no dowry!"

"Vat vould dis dowry be?" asked Yankele, by way of diversion.

"Oh, unique—quite unique. First of all there would be all the money she gets from the Synagogue. Our Synagogue gives considerable dowries to portionless girls. There are large bequests for the purpose."

Yankele's eyes glittered.

"Ah, vat gentlemen you Spaniards be!"

"Then I daresay I should hand over to my son-in-law all my Jerusalem land."

"Have you property in the Holy Land?" said Yankele.

"First class, with an unquestionable title. And, of course, I would give you some province or other in this country."

"What!" gasped Yankele.

"Could I do less?" said Manasseh blandly. "My own flesh and blood, remember! Ah, here is my door. It is too late to ask you in. Good Sabbath! Don't forget your appointment to dine with Rabbi Remorse Red-herring to-morrow."

"Good Sabbath!" faltered Yankele, and crawled home heavy-hearted to Dinah's Buildings, Tripe Yard, Whitechapel, where the memory of him lingers even unto this day.

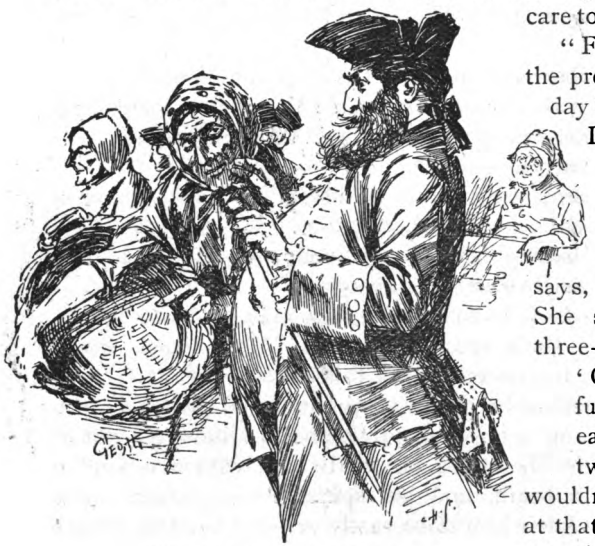
Rabbi Remorse Red-herring was an unofficial preacher who officiated at mourning services in private houses, having a gift of well-turned eulogy. He was a big, burly man with overlapping stomach and a red beard, and his spiritual consolations drew tears. His clients knew him to be vastly self-indulgent in private life, and abstemious in the matter of benevolence; but they did not confound the *rôles*. As a mourning preacher he gave every satisfaction: he was regular and punctual, and did not keep the congregation waiting, and he had had considerable experience in showing that there was yet balm in Gilead.

He had about five ways of showing it—the variants depending upon the circumstances. If, as not infrequently happened, the person deceased was a stranger to him, he would inquire in the passage: "Was it man or woman? Boy or girl? Married or single? Any children? Young 'uns or old 'uns?"

When these questions had been answered, he was ready. He knew exactly which of his five consolatory addresses to deliver—they were all sufficiently vague and general to cover considerable variety of circumstance, and even when he misheard the replies

in the passage, and dilated on the grief of a departed widower's relict, the results were not fatal throughout. The few impossible passages might be explained by the mishearing of the audience. Sometimes—very rarely—he would venture on a supplementary sentence or two fitting the specific occasion, but very cautiously, for a man with a reputation for extempore addresses cannot be too wary of speaking on the spur of the moment.

Off obituary lines he was a failure; at any rate, his one attempt to preach from an English Synagogue pulpit resulted in a nickname. His theme was Remorse, which he explained with much care to the congregation. "For instance," said the preacher, "the other day I was walking over London Bridge, when I saw a fishwoman standing with a basket of red-herrings. I says, 'How much?' She says, 'Two for three-halfpence.' I says, 'Oh, that's frightfully dear! I can easily get three for twopence.' But she wouldn't part with them at that price, so I went on, thinking I'd meet another woman with a similar lot over the water. They were lovely fat herrings, and my chaps watered in anticipation of the treat of eating them. But when I got to the other end of the bridge there was no other fishwoman to be seen. So I resolved to turn back to the first fishwife, for, after all, I reflected, the herrings were really very cheap, and I had only complained in the way of business. But when I got back the woman was just sold out. I could have torn my hair with vexation. Now, that's what I call Remorse."



"'I COULD HAVE TORN MY HAIR.'"

After that the Rabbi was what the congregation called Remorse; also Red-herring.

The Rabbi's fondness for concrete exemplification of abstract ideas was not, however, to be stifled, and there was one illustration

of Charity which found a place in all the five sermons of consolation.

"If you have a pair of old breeches send them to the Rabbi."

Rabbi Remorse Red-herring was, however, as is the way of preachers, himself aught but a concrete exemplification of the virtues he inculcated. He lived generously—through other people's generosity—but no one could boast of having received a farthing from him over and above what was due to them; while *Schnorrers* (who deemed considerable sums due to them) regarded him in the light of a defalcating bankrupt. He, for his part, had a counter-vailing grudge against the world, fancying the work he did for it but feebly remunerated. "I get so little," ran his bitter plaint, "that I couldn't live, *if it were not for the fasts*." And, indeed, the fasts of the religion were worth much more to him than to Yankele; his meals were so profuse that his savings from this source were quite a little revenue. As Yankele had pointed out, he was married. And his wife had given him a child, but it died at the age of seven, bequeathing to him the only poignant sorrow of his life. He was too jealous to call in a rival consolation preacher during those dark days, and none of his own five sermons seemed to fit the case. It was some months before he took his meals regularly.

At no time had anyone else taken meals in his house, except by law entitled. Though she had only two to cook for, his wife habitually provided for three, counting her husband no mere unit. Herself she reckoned as a half.

It was with intelligible perturbation, therefore, that Yankele, dressed in some other man's best, approached the house of Rabbi Remorse Red-herring about a quarter of an hour before the Sabbath mid-day meal, intent on sharing it with him.

"No dinner, no marriage!" was da Costa's stern ukase.

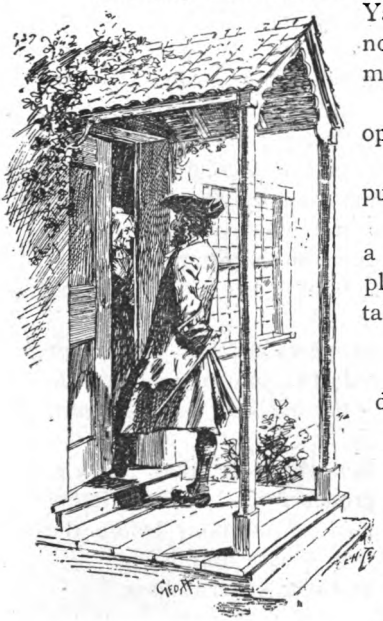
What wonder if the inaccessible meal took upon itself the grandiosity of a wedding feast! Deborah da Costa's lovely face tantalised him like a mirage.

The Sabbath day was bleak, but chiller was his heart. The Rabbi had apartments in Steward Street, Spitalfields, an elegant suite on the ground-floor, for he stinted himself in nothing but charity. At the entrance was a porch—a pointed Gothic arch of wood supported by two pillars. As Yankele mounted the three wooden steps, breathing as painfully as if they were three hundred, and wondering if he would ever get merely as far as the other side of the door, he was assailed by the temptation to go and dine

peacefully at home, and represent to da Costa that he had feasted with the Rabbi. Manasseh would never know, Manasseh had taken no steps to ascertain if he satisfied the test or not. Such carelessness, he told himself in righteous indignation, deserved fitting punishment. But, on the other hand, he recalled Manasseh's trust in him; Manasseh believed him a man of honour, and the patron's elevation of soul awoke an answering chivalry in the parasite.

He decided to make the attempt at least, for there would be plenty of time to say he had succeeded, after he had failed.

Vibrating with tremors of nobility as well as of apprehension, Yankele lifted the knocker. He had no programme, trusting to chance and mother-wit.



"'I VISH TO SEE DE RABBI.'"

Mrs. Remorse Red-herring half opened the door.

"I vish to see de Rabbi," he said, putting one foot within.

"He is engaged," said the wife—a tiny thin creature who had been plump and pretty. "He is very busy talking with a gentleman."

"Oh, but I can vait."

"But the Rabbi will be having his dinner soon."

"I can vait till after dinner," said Yankele obligingly.

"Oh, but the Rabbi sits long at table."

"I don't mind," said Yankele with undiminished placidity, "de longer de better."

The poor woman looked perplexed. "I'll tell my husband," she said at last.

Yankele had an anxious moment in the passage.

"The Rabbi wishes to know what you want," she said when she returned.

"I vant to get married," said Yankele with an inspiration of veracity.

"But my husband doesn't marry people."

"Vy not?"

"He only brings consolation into households," she explained ingenuously.

"Vell, I won't get married midout him," Yankele murmured lugubriously.

The little woman went back in bewilderment to her bosom's lord. Forthwith out came Rabbi Remorse Red-herring, curiosity and cupidity in his eyes. He wore the skull-cap of sanctity, but looked the gourmand in spite of it.

"Good Sabbath, sir! What is this about your getting married?"

"It's a long story," said Yankele, "and as your good vife told me your dinner is just ready, I mustn't keep you now."

"No, there are still a few minutes before dinner. What is it?"

Yankele shook his head, "I couldn't tink of keeping you in dis draughty passage."

"I don't mind. I don't feel any draught."

"Dat's just vere de danger lays. You don't notice, and one day you find yourself laid up vid rheumatism, and you vill have Remorse," said Yankele with a twinkle. "Your life is precious—if *you* die, who vill console de community?"

It was an ambiguous remark, but the Rabbi understood it in its most flattering sense, and his little eyes beamed. "I would ask you inside," he said, "but I have a visitor."

"No matter," said Yankele, "what I have to say to you, Rabbi, is not private. A stranger may hear it."

Still undecided, the Rabbi muttered, "You want me to marry you?"

"I have come to get married," replied Yankele.

"But I have never been called upon to marry people."

"It's never too late to mend, dey say."

"Strange—strange," murmured the Rabbi reflectively.

"Vat is strange?"

"That you should come to me just to-day. But why did you not go to Rabbi Sandman?"

"Rabbi Sandman!" replied Yankele with contempt. "Vere vould be de good of going to him?"

"But why not?"

"Every *Schnorrer* goes to him," said Yankele frankly.

"Hum!" mused the Rabbi. "Perhaps there *is* an opening for a more select marrier. Come in, then, I can give you five minutes if you really don't mind talking before a stranger."

He threw open the door, and led the way into the sitting-room.

Yankele followed exultant; the outworks were already carried, and his heart beat high with hope. But at his first glance within, he reeled and almost fell.

Standing with his back to the fire and dominating the room was Manasseh Bueno Barzillai Azevedo da Costa!

"Ah, Yankele, good Sabbath!" said da Costa affably.

"G-g-ood Sabbath!" stammered Yankele.

"Why, you know each other!" cried the Rabbi.

"Oh, yes," said Manasseh, "an acquaintance of yours, too, apparently."

"No, he is just come to see me about something," replied the Rabbi.

"I thought you did not know the Rabbi, Mr. da Costa?" Yankele could not help saying.

"I didn't. I only had the pleasure of making his acquaintance half an hour ago. I met him in the street as he was coming home from morning service, and he was kind enough to invite me to dinner."

Yankele gasped; despite his secret amusement at Manasseh's airs there were moments when the easy magnificence of the man overwhelmed him, extorted his reluctant admiration. How in Heaven's name had the Spaniard conquered at a blow!

Looking down at the table he now observed that it was already laid for dinner—and for three! He should have been that third. Was it fair of Manasseh to handicap him thus? Naturally, there would be infinitely less chance of a fourth being invited than a third—to say nothing of the dearth of provisions. "But, surely, you don't intend to stay to dinner!" he complained in dismay.

"I have given my word," said Manasseh, "and I shouldn't care to disappoint the Rabbi."

"Oh, it's no disappointment, no disappointment," remarked Rabbi Remorse Red-herring cordially, "I could just as well come round and see you after dinner."

"After dinner I never see people," said Manasseh majestically; "I sleep."

The Rabbi dared not make further protest: he turned to Yankele and asked, "Well, now, what's this about your marriage?"

"I can't tell you before Mr. da Costa," replied Yankele, to gain time.

"Why not? You said anybody might hear."

"Nothing of the sort. I said a stranger might hear. But Mr. da Costa isn't a stranger. He knows too much about the matter."

"What shall we do, then?" murmured the Rabbi.

"I can vait till after dinner," said Yankele, with good-natured carelessness. "*I* don't sleep——"

Before the Rabbi could reply, the wife brought in a baked dish, and set it on the table. Her husband glowered at her, but she, regular as clockwork, and as unthinking, produced the black bottle of *schnapps*. It was her husband's business to get rid of Yankele; her business was to bring on the dinner. If she had delayed, he would have raged equally. She was not only wife, but maid-of-all-work.

Seeing the advanced state of the preparations, Manasseh da Costa took his seat at the table; obeying her husband's significant glance, Mrs. Red-herring took up her position at the foot. The Rabbi himself sat down at the head, behind the dish. He always served, being the only person he could rely upon to gauge his capacities. Yankele was left standing. The odour of the meat and potatoes impregnated the atmosphere with wistful poetry.

Suddenly the Rabbi looked up and perceived Yankele. "Will you do as we do?" he said in seductive accents.

The *Schnorrer's* heart gave one wild, mad throb of joy. He laid his hand on the only other chair.

"I don't mind if I do," he said, with responsive amiability.

"Then go home and have *your* dinner," said the Rabbi.

Yankele's wild heart-beat was exchanged for a stagnation as of death. A shiver ran down his spine. He darted an agonised appealing glance at Manasseh, who sniggered inscrutably.

"Oh, I don't tink I ought to go avay and leave you midout a tird man for grace," he said in tones of prophetic rebuke. "Since I *am* here, it vould be a sin not to stay."

The Rabbi, having a certain connection with religion, was cornered; he was not able to repudiate such an opportunity of that more pious form of grace which needs the presence of three males.

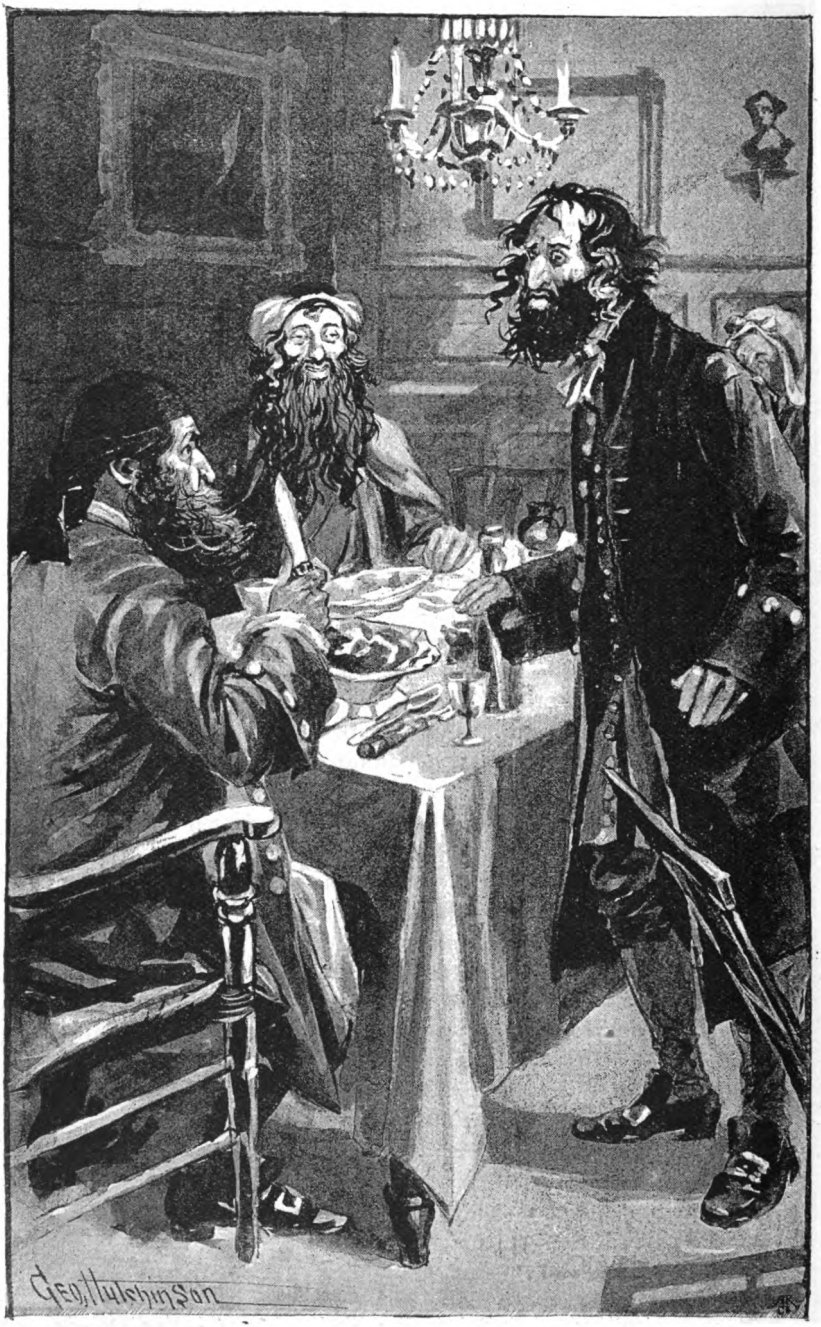
"Oh, I should be very glad for you to stay," said the Rabbi, "but, unfortunately, we have only three meat-plates."

"Oh, de dish vill do for me."

"Very well, then!" said the Rabbi.

And Yankele, with the old mad heart-beat, took the fourth chair, darting a triumphant glance at the still sniggering Manasseh.

The hostess rose, misunderstanding her husband's optical signals, and fished out a knife and fork from the recesses of a chiffonier. The host first heaped his own plate high with



"THEN GO HOME AND HAVE YOUR DINNER"

artistically-coloured potatoes and stiff meat—less from discourtesy than from life-long habit—then divided the remainder in unequal portions between Manasseh and the little woman in rough correspondence with their sizes. Finally, he handed Yankele the empty dish.

"You see there is nothing left," he said simply. "We didn't even expect one visitor."

"First come, first served," observed Manasseh, with his sphinx-like expression, as he fell-to.

Yankele sat frozen, staring blankly at the dish, his brain as empty. He had lost.

Such a dinner was a hollow mockery—like the dish. He could not expect Manasseh to accept it, quibbled he ever so cunningly. He sat for a minute or two as in a dream, the music of knife and fork ringing mockingly in his ears, his hungry palate moistened by the delicious savour. Then he shook off his stupor, and all his being was desperately astrain, questing for an idea. Manasseh discoursed with his host on neo-Hebrew literature.

"We thought of starting a journal at Grodno," said the Rabbi, "only the funds——"

"Be you den a native of Grodno?" interrupted Yankele.

"Yes, I was born there," mumbled the Rabbi, "but I left there twenty years ago." His mouth was full, and he did not cease to ply the cutlery.

"Ah!" said Yankele enthusiastically, "den you must be de famous preacher everybody speaks of. I do not remember you myself, for I vas a boy, but dey say ve haven't got no such preachers nowaday."

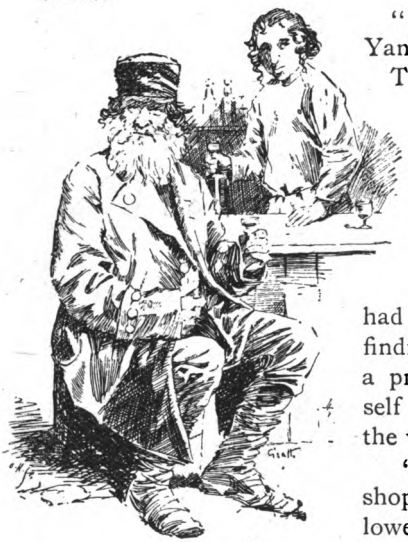
"In Grodno, my husband kept a brandy shop," put in the hostess.

There was a bad quarter of a minute of silence. To Yankele's relief, the Rabbi ended it by observing, "Yes, but doubtless the gentleman (you will excuse me calling you that, sir, I don't know your real name) alluded to my fame as a boy-Maggid. At the age of five I preached to audiences of many hundreds, and my manipulation of texts, my demonstrations that they did not mean what they said, drew tears even from octogenarians familiar with the Torah from their earliest infancy. It was said there never was such a wonder-child since Ben Sira."

"But why did you give it up?" enquired Manasseh.

"It gave me up," said the Rabbi, putting down his knife and fork to expound an ancient grievance. "A boy-Maggid cannot

last more than a few years. Up to nine I was still a draw, but every year the wonder grew less, and, when I was thirteen, my Bar-Mitzvah (confirmation) sermon occasioned no more sensation than those of the many other lads whose sermons I had written for them. I struggled along as boyishly as I could for some time after that, but it was in a losing cause. My age won on me daily. As it is said, 'I have been young, and now I am old.' In vain I composed the most eloquent addresses to be heard in Grodno. In vain I gave a course on the emotions, with explanations and instances from daily life—the fickle public preferred younger attractions. So at last I gave it up and sold *vodki*."



"SOLD VODKI."

"Vat a pity! Vat a pity!" ejaculated Yankele, "after vinning fame in de Torah!"

"But what is a man to do? He is not always a boy," replied the Rabbi. "Yes, I kept a brandy shop. That's what I call Degradation. But there is always balm in Gilead. I lost so much money over it that I had to emigrate to England, where, finding nothing else to do, I became a preacher again." He poured himself out a glass of *schnapps*, ignoring the water.

"I heard nothing of de *vodki* shop," said Yankele; "it vas svallowed up in your earlier fame."

The Rabbi drained the glass of *schnapps*, smacked his lips, and resumed his knife and fork. Manasseh reached for the unoffered bottle, and helped himself liberally. The Rabbi unostentatiously withdrew it beyond his easy reach, looking at Yankele the while.

"How long have you been in England?" he asked the Pole.

"Not long," said Yankele.

"Ha! Does Gabriel the cantor still suffer from neuralgia?"

Yankele looked sad. "No—he is dead," he said.

"Dear me! Well, he was tottering when I knew him. His blowing of the ram's horn got wheezier every year. And how is his young brother, Samuel?"

"He is dead!" said Yankele.

"What, he too! Tut, tut! He was so robust. Has Mendelssohn, the stonemason, got many more girls?"

"He is dead!" said Yankele.

"Nonsense!" gasped the Rabbi, dropping his knife and fork. "Why, I heard from him only a few months ago."

"He is dead!" said Yankele.

"Good gracious me! Mendelssohn dead!" After a moment of emotion he resumed his meal. "But his sons and daughters are all doing well, I hope. The eldest, Solomon, was a most pious youth, and his third girl, Neshamah, promised to be a rare beauty."

"They are dead!" said Yankele.

This time the Rabbi turned pale as a corpse himself. He laid down his knife and fork automatically.

"D—dead," he breathed in an awestruck whisper. "All?"

"Everyone. De same cholera took all de family."

The Rabbi covered his face with his hands. "Then poor Solomon's wife is a widow. I hope he left her enough to live upon."

"No, but it doesn't matter," said Yankele.

"It matters a great deal," cried the Rabbi.

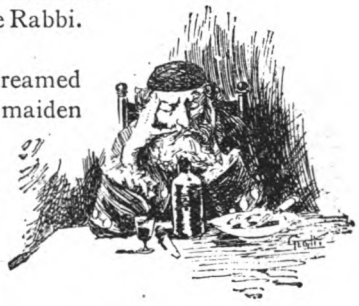
"She is dead," said Yankele.

"Rebecca Schwartz dead!" screamed the Rabbi, for he had once loved the maiden himself, and, not having married her, had still a tenderness for her.

"Rebecca Schwartz," repeated Yankele inexorably.

"Was it the cholera?" faltered the Rabbi.

"No, she vas heart-broke."



"IN MOURNFUL MEDITATION."

Rabbi Remorse Red-herring silently pushed his plate away, and leaned his elbows upon the table and his face upon his palms, and his chin upon the bottle of *schnapps* in mournful meditation.

"You are not eating, Rabbi," said Yankele insinuatingly.

"I have lost my appetite," said the Rabbi.

"Vat a pity to let food get cold and spoil! You'd better eat it."

The Rabbi shook his head querulously.

"Den I vill eat it," cried Yankele indignantly. "Good hot food like dat!"

"As you like," said the Rabbi wearily. And Yankele began

to eat at lightning speed, pausing only to wink at the inscrutable Manasseh; and to cast yearning glances at the inaccessible *schnapps*.

Presently the Rabbi looked up: "You're quite sure all these people are dead?" he asked with a dawning suspicion.

"May my blood be poured out like this *schnapps*," protested Yankele, dislodging the bottle and vehemently pouring the spirit into a tumbler, "if dey be not."

The Rabbi relapsed into his moody attitude, and retained it till his wife brought in a big willow-pattern china dish of stewed prunes and pippins. She produced four plates for these, and so Yankele finished his meal in the unquestionable status of a first-class guest. The Rabbi was by this time sufficiently recovered to toy with two platefuls in a melancholy silence which he did not break till his mouth opened involuntarily to intone the grace.

When grace was over he turned to Manasseh and said, "And what was this way you were suggesting to me of getting a profitable Sephardic connection?"

"I did, indeed, wonder why you did not extend your practice as consolation preacher among the Spanish Jews," replied Manasseh gravely. "But after what we have just heard of the death-rate of Jews in Grodno, I should seriously advise you to go back there."

"No, they cannot forget that I was once a boy," replied the Rabbi with equal gravity. "I prefer the Spanish Jews. They are all well-to-do. They may not die so often as the Russians, but they die better, so to speak. You will give me introductions, you will speak of me to your illustrious friends, I understand."

"You understand!" repeated Manasseh in dignified astonishment. "You do not understand. I shall do no such thing."

"But you yourself suggested it!" cried the Rabbi excitedly.

"I? Nothing of the kind. I had heard of you and your ministrations to mourners, and meeting you in the street this afternoon for the first time, it struck me to enquire why you did not carry your consolations into the bosom of my community where so much more money is to be made. I said I wondered you had not done so from the first. And you—invited me to dinner. I still wonder. That is all, my good man." He rose to go.

The haughty rebuke silenced the Rabbi, though his heart was hot with a vague sense of injury.

"Do you come my way, Yankele?" said Manasseh carelessly.

The Rabbi turned hastily to his second guest.

"When do you want me to marry you?" he asked.

"You have married me," replied Yankele.

"I?" gasped the Rabbi. It was the last straw.

"Yes," reiterated Yankele. "Hasn't he, Mr. da Costa?

His heart went pit-a-pat as he put the question.

"Certainly," said Manasseh without hesitation.

Yankele's face was made glorious summer. Only two of the quartette knew the secret of his radiance.

"There, Rabbi," he cried exultantly, "Good Sabbath!

"Good Sabbath!" added Manasseh.

"Good Sabbath," dazedly murmured the Rabbi.

"Good Sabbath," added his wife.

"Congratulate me!" cried Yankele when they got outside.

"On what?" asked Manasseh.

"On being your future son-in-law, of course."

"Oh, on *that?* Certainly, I congratulate you most heartily." The two *Schnorrers* shook hands. "I thought you were asking for compliments on your manœuvring."

"Vy, doesn't it deserve dem?"

"No," said Manasseh magisterially.

"No?" queried Yankele, his heart sinking again. "Vy not?"

"Why did you kill so many people?"

"Somebody must die dat I may live."

"You said that before," said Manasseh severely. "A good *Schnorrer* would not have slaughtered so many for his dinner. It is a waste of good material. And then you told lies!"

"PRUNES AND PIPPINS."

"How do you know they are not dead?" pleaded Yankele.

The King shook his head reprovingly. "A first-class *Schnorrer* never lies," he laid it down.

"I might have made truth go as far as a lie—if you hadn't come to dinner yourself."

"What is that you say? Why, I came to encourage you by showing you how easy your task was."

"On de contrary, you made it much harder for me. Dere vas no dinner left."

"But against that you must reckon that since the Rabbi had already invited one person, he couldn't be so hard to tackle as I had fancied."

"Oh, but you must not judge from yourself," protested Yankele. "You be not a *Schnorrer*—you be a miracle."

"But I should like a miracle for my son-in-law also," grumbled the King.

"And if you had to *schnorr* a son-in-law you vould get a miracle," said Yankele soothingly. "As he has to *schnorr* you, he gets the miracle."

"True," observed Manasseh musingly, "and I think you might therefore be very well content without the dowry."

"So I might," admitted Yankele, "only *you* vould not be content to break your promise. I suppose I shall have some of de dowry on de marriage morning."

"On that morning you shall get my daughter—without fail. Surely that will be enough for one day!"

"Vell, ven do I get de money your daughter gets from de Synagogue?"

"When she gets it from the Synagogue, of course."

"How much vill it be?"

"It may be a hundred and fifty pounds," said Manasseh pompously.

Yankele's eyes sparkled.

"And it may be less," added Manasseh as an after-thought.

"How much less?" enquired Yankele anxiously.

"A hundred and fifty pounds," repeated Manasseh pompously.

"D'you mean to say I may get noting?"

"Certainly, if she gets nothing. What I promised you was the money she gets from the Synagogue. Should she be fortunate enough in the *sorteo*——"

"De *sorteo!* Vat is dat?"

"The dowry I told you of. It is accorded by lot. My daughter has as good a chance as any other maiden. By winning her you stand to win a hundred and fifty pounds. It is a handsome amount. There are not many fathers who would do as much for their daughters," concluded Manasseh with conscious magnanimity.

"But about de Jerusalem estate!" said Yankele, shifting his standpoint. "I don't vant to go and live dere. De Messiah is not yet come."

"No, you will hardly be able to live on it," admitted Manasseh.

"You do not object to my selling it, den?"

"Oh, no! If you are so sordid, if you have no true Jewish sentiment!"

"Ven can I come into possession?"

"On the wedding day if you like."

"One may as vell get it over," said Yankele, suppressing a desire to rub his hands in glee. "As de Talmud says, 'One peppercorn to-day is better dan a basketful of pumpkins to-morrow.'"

"All right! I will bring it to the Synagogue."

"Bring it to de Synagogue!" repeated Yankele in amaze. "Oh, you mean de deed of transfer."

"The deed of transfer! Do you think I waste my substance on solicitors? No, I will bring the property itself."

"But how can you do dat?"

"Where is the difficulty?" demanded Manasseh with withering contempt. "Surely a child could carry a casket of Jerusalem earth to Synagogue!"

"A casket of earth! Is your property in Jerusalem only a casket of earth?"

"What then? You didn't expect it would be a casket of diamonds?" retorted Manasseh, with gathering wrath. "To a true Jew a casket of Jerusalem earth is worth all the diamonds in the world."

"But your Jerusalem property is a fraud!" gasped Yankele.

"Oh, no, you may be easy on that point. It's quite genuine. I know there is a good deal of spurious Palestine earth in circulation, and that many a dead man who has clods of it thrown into his tomb is nevertheless buried in unholy soil. But this casket I was careful to obtain from a Rabbi of extreme sanctity. It was the only thing he had worth *schnorring*."

"I don't suppose I shall get more dan a crown for it," said Yankele, with irrepressible indignation.

"That's what I say," returned Manasseh; "and never did I think a son-in-law of mine would meditate selling my holy soil for a paltry five shillings! I will not withdraw my promise, but I am disappointed in you—bitterly disappointed. Had I known this earth was not to cover your bones, it should have gone down to the grave with me, as enjoined in my last will and testament, by the side of which it stands in my safe."

"Very vell, I von't sell it," said Yankele sulkily.

"You relieve my soul. As the *Mishnah* says, 'He who marries a wife for money begets froward children.'"

"And vat about de province in England?" asked Yankele, in low, despondent tones. He had never believed in *that*, but now, behind all his despair and incredulity, was a vague hope that something might yet be saved from the crash.

"Oh, you shall choose your own," replied Manasseh graciously. "We will get a large map of London, and I will mark off in red pencil the domain in which I *schnorr*. You will then choose any district in this—say, two main streets and a dozen byeways and alleys—which shall be marked off in blue pencil, and whatever province of my kingdom you pick, I undertake not to *schnorr* in, from your wedding-day onwards. I need not tell you how valuable such a province already is; under careful administration, such as you would be able to give it, the revenue from it might be doubled, trebled. I do not think your tribute to me need be more than ten per cent."

"THE UNCONSCIOUS BRIDE OPENED THE DOOR."

Yankele walked along mesmerised, reduced to somnambulism by his magnificently masterful patron.

"Oh, here we are!" said Manasseh, stopping short. "Won't you come in and see the bride, and wish her joy?"

A flash of joy came into Yankele's own face, dissipating his glooms. After all there was always da Costa's beautiful daughter—a solid, substantial satisfaction. He was glad she was not an item of the dowry.

The unconscious bride opened the door.

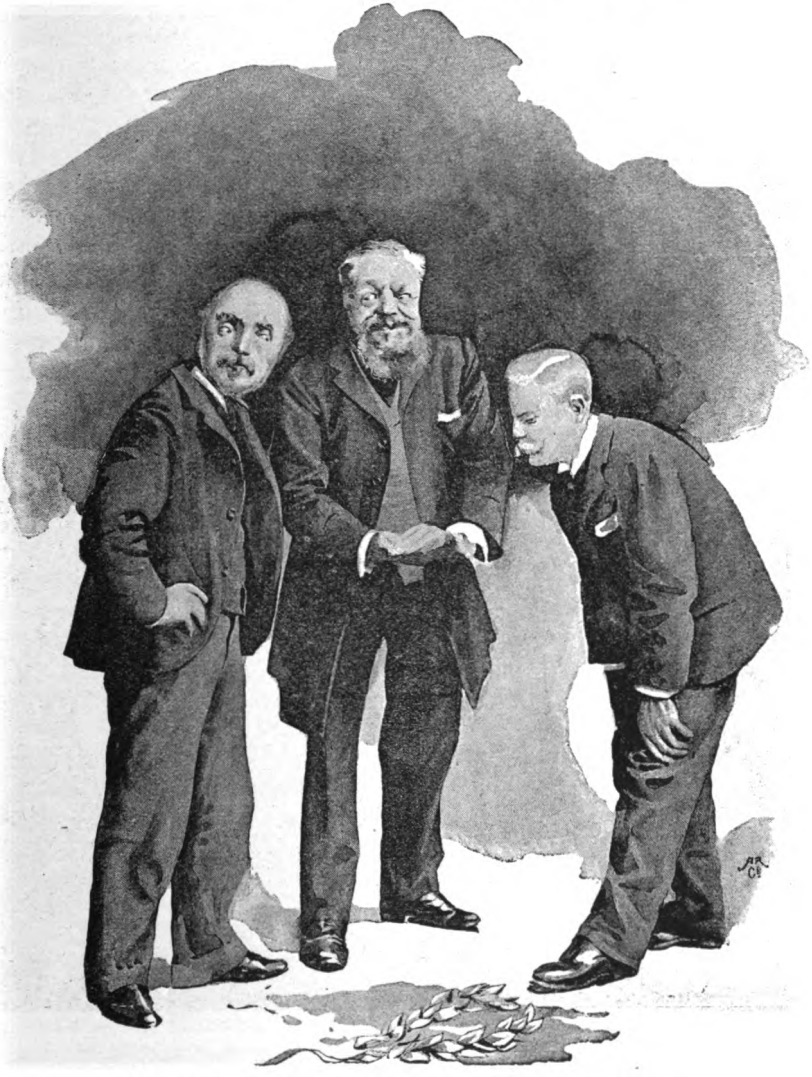
"Ah, ha, Yankele!" said Manasseh, his paternal heart aglow at the sight of her loveliness. "You will be not only a king, but a rich king. As it is written, 'Who is rich? He who hath a beautiful wife.'"

(To be continued.)

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

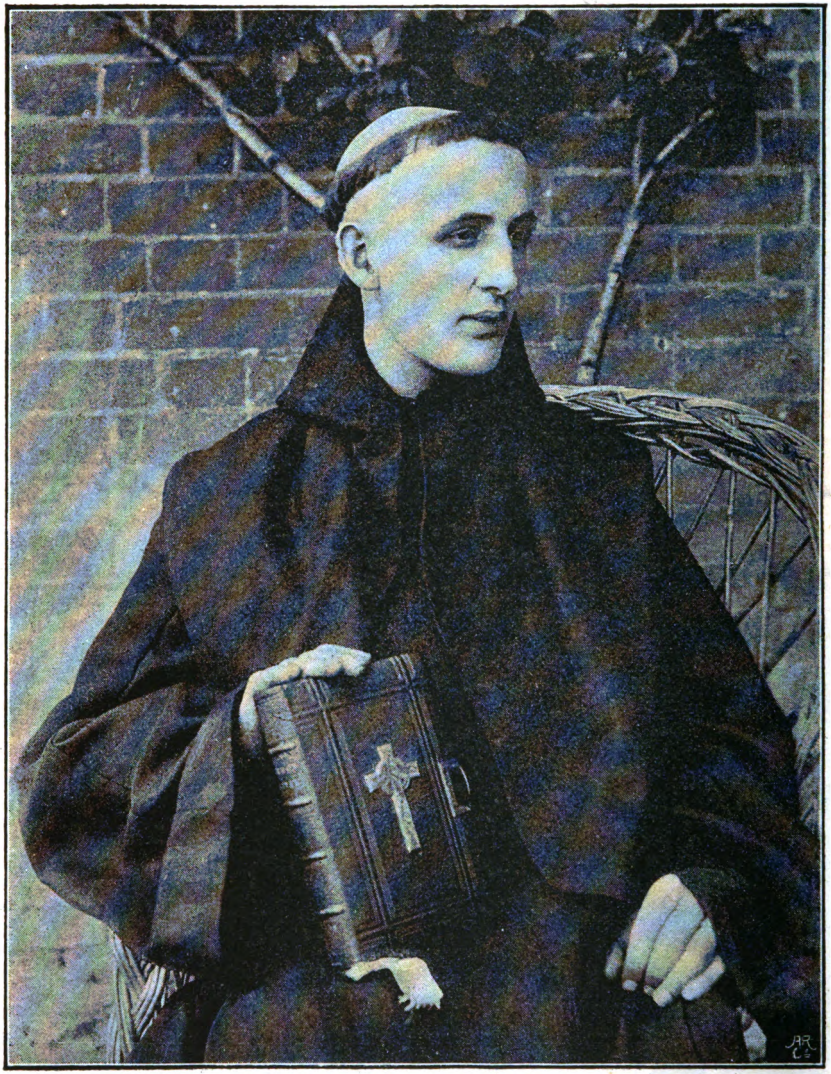
LEWIS MORRIS, SIR EDWIN ARNOLD, AND ALFRED AUSTIN.



LEWIS MORRIS. SIR E. ARNOLD. ALFRED AUSTIN.

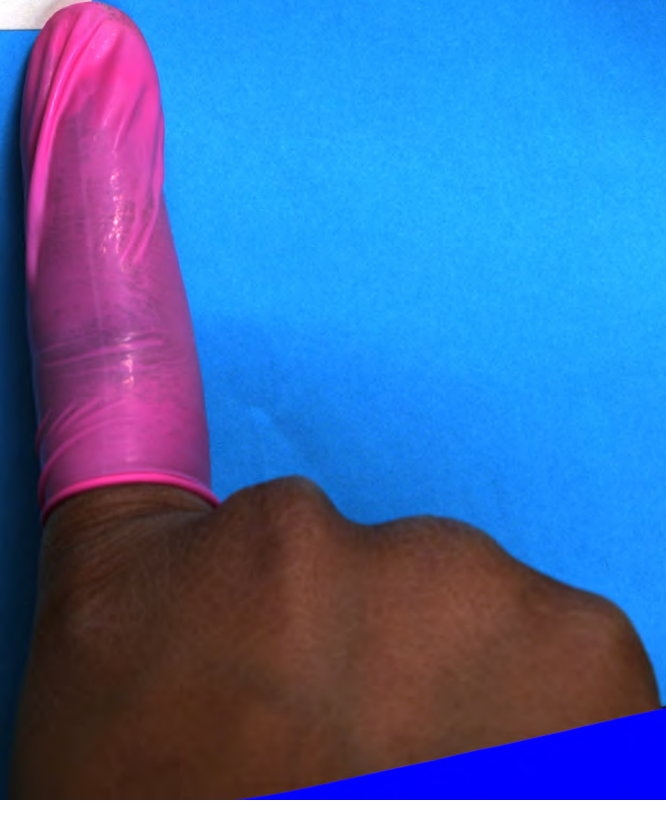
"HEADS OR TAILS."

. . . . "Poets of contention, wrestlers born,
Who challenge iron circumstance, and fail."—Alfred Austin.



"FATHER IGNATIUS."

NOTE.—The portrait prefixed to the article on Father Ignatius is that of Father Michael, the photographer of most of the illustrations.



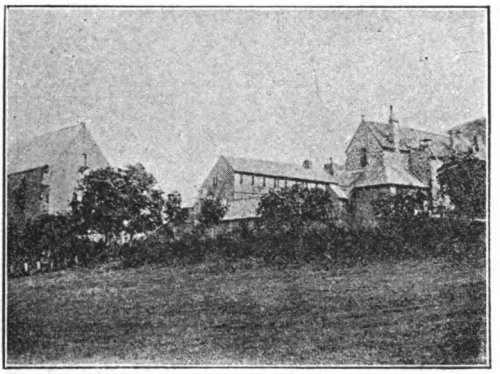
Lions in their Dens.

FATHER IGNATIUS AT LLANTHONY ABBEY.

By Raymond Blathwayt.

Illustrations by the Brethren of the Abbey.

THE Abbot of Llanthony and I sat upon the side of a mountain overlooking a vast, a very lovely, and an almost uninhabited valley in Wales; around about us, and enclosing us as it were in a great circle, stood the solemn hills, shrouded in mist, the breath of mountain heather was on the wind, the bleat of sheep and the lowing of cattle. Far below us lay the monastery and its great church glowing in the golden sunlight. One caught now and again a glimpse of a cowled and hooded figure, and one heard the deep baying of the monastery dogs; shadow and sunshine passed in ever recurring waves over the distant landscape; no puff of railway engine or scream of whistle, no rude burst of modern song to dispel the delightful illusion that I had, somehow or another, slipped back into the Middle Ages—an illusion to which the figure at my side gave a curious air of reality. There sat the Abbot, as his predecessors may have sat any time within the dead and gone centuries, clad in the garb of St. Benedict, with tonsured crown, and the pastoral staff within his hand. A notable figure this; of the middle height, with clean-shaven, clear-cut handsome face—a face full of thought, full of sadness, full of enthusiasm, I may even say of fanaticism, but full also of human nature, of intimate knowledge of the world and the seamy side of life, keen with a sense of humour, bright now and again with a smile of wonderful charm and sweetness. Such is



THE ABBEY.

the man at my side, and such the ever-changing expression he wears as he tells me the story of his eventful life.

"I was, even as a child, of a very religious turn of mind. When I was ever so little, if a Quaker passed the window, my mother used to call me to see him, because I was so fond of them on account of the stand they seemed to me to make against the world for religion's sake. I was educated for the Church at the Scotch Theological College of Glenalmond. It was at my first curacy at St. James's, Plymouth, where I met Dr. Pusey and Miss Sellon, the lady who first restored the monastic life for women in the Church of England, that I determined in 1861 to embrace the life of a monk. One of Miss Sellon's nuns made me my first monastic dress, and Dr. Pusey sent it to me, and Bishop Forbes, of Brechin, at the same time sent me his blessing in my new career. I fell ill, and was ordered abroad to Belgium, where my monastic vocation was deepened by all I saw and heard. I longed to be to our beloved Church of England what Père Lacordaire and other religious men were to the Churches of France and Belgium. Here I met our own Father Lowder, who begged me to join St. George's Mission in the East of London. My first attempt to establish a monastery was in Norwich, where, however, the Bishop, who was bitterly opposed to me, forbade me to preach. The Protestants stirred up active violence against me and my companions; my health gave way, our clothes wore out, and I was penniless." Here for a moment the Abbot paused, overcome by recollections of a very painful nature; after a while he went on with a story of

THE ABBOT.

deepest interest, much of which, however, is of too intimate, too sacred a nature for publication. It was the story of a life of persecution, endurance, of tremendous pluck and resolution, a story which ended in the calm of Llanthony Abbey in 1870. "But,"

THE HIGH ALTAR.

said my host, "even here we were not without our dreadful trials. At first I had only a cold, wet cowshed to live in, while the other monks occupied a draughty, windowless barn close by. Our sufferings were dreadful in winter. I have often risen at

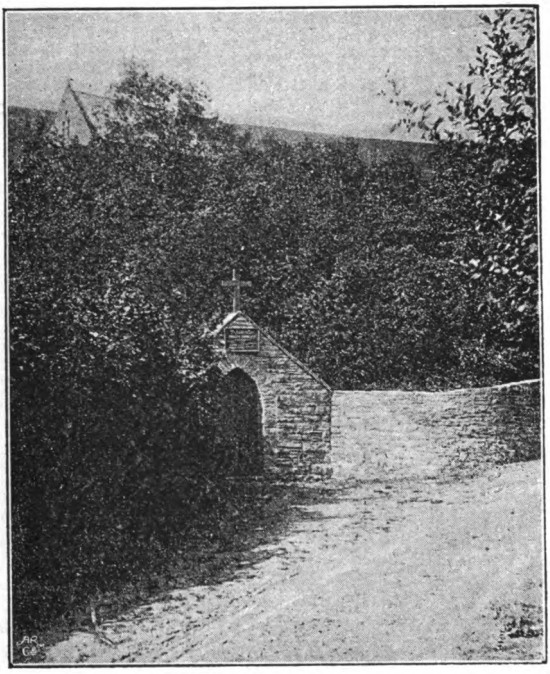
five a.m. from my bed in this cold, damp shed, my blanket literally steaming with wet, to ring the bell for the 'Office of Prime.'

MRS. LYNE, MOTHER OF FATHER IGNATIUS.

But in time things mended, as they always do if one has pluck and patience *and trust*," he added with meaning as he laid his hand upon my arm, "and now you see us as we are. When we go down the hill you must, as a special favour, go over the building, and see for yourself what life in a monastery in England really is." At this moment there came stealing through the summer air the sound of the monastery bell pealing out some summons to the faithful monks. I observed on the romance and the poetry of it all. The good Father laughed heartily — and Father Ignatius *can* laugh; no one can more thoroughly abandon himself to the lightheartedness of the moment than he. "Oh! that dreadful bell," said he. "'Les Cloches du Monastère' is a very pretty piece of music for young ladies in a drawing-room to execute—in more senses than one very often," he added, with a huge enjoyment of his little joke. "The monastery bell may be a fitting subject for poetic outsiders to write upon; it may be a charming finish to a romantic landscape like this, but to the monk or nun who is kept on the move by it all day and half the night it is anything but poetic or romantic, I can assure you. It has a most matter-of-fact,

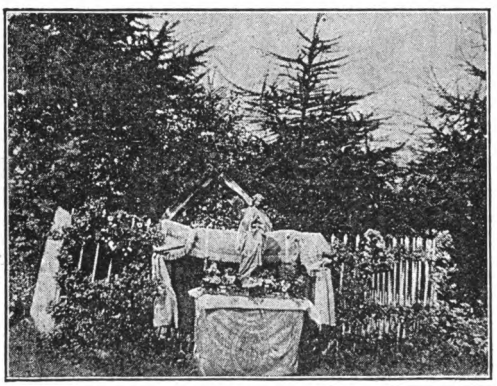
BENEDICTINE ASSOCIATE-SISTERS.

business-like, and oftentimes aggravating ring in its tones, ordering one about from pillar to post from two a.m. to eight p.m. every day of every week of every month of every year until the end." "It is a life that demands a very special kind of man to live it, then?" said I. "Indeed, yes," replied the Abbot. "To forsake *everything* for religion requires a tremendous power of self-sacrifice and self-surrender. A man, for instance, has literally to take upon himself the form of a servant. A novice will sometimes petulantly declare 'he has no vocation for a housemaid's life.' Very well, then, if he is above his pail and broom and his duster, he is above the life and work of a monk. How did you like your dinner to-day?" my host asked me suddenly. "Oh, it was very good," I replied in infinite surprise at the apparently irrelevant question—"why do you ask?" "Because, my friend, the monk who cooked your dinner is absolutely a novice at cooking, but, thank goodness, he is a very apt one at learning. Oh! dear," went on the Father, with a comical expression of dismay, "how we have suffered at times when a new man has gone into the kitchen for the first time in his life. Yes, you are right," he continued thoughtfully, "it takes a great deal to make a good monk, and it is hopeless for some of the men I have had here to attempt the life. '*I* was not brought up as a housemaid,' '*I* am not going to be made a slave of,' '*I* did not come to the monastery to scrub floors,' &c. Such a person will not allow himself to be found fault with without getting into



THE ABBOT S GATE.

a violent passion. Then, when I am obliged to send him away, people say, 'There, another has left, nobody stays. Father Ignatius drives everyone away.' As a matter of fact, I have succeeded better than anyone else. You remember Farrar tried to start a brotherhood. I was in America at the time. The news was flashed over to New York. The first thing I knew of it was one morning when eleven reporters called on me before I was up to ask my opinion. I said, 'Gentlemen, are you all ready?' 'Yes.' 'Take your pencils and paper, then.' 'Yes.' 'Now, are you all ready, and you want to hear what I think of this attempt.' 'Yes.' '*First catch your hare*'—that was all I said. In a month the whole thing had collapsed." We slowly walked down the hill, the Father proudly pointing out his corn, which waved yellow in the sunshine. "The best hay, the best corn, and the fattest cattle in the country," said he, with immense glee. A tatterdemalion tramp, woebegone, foot-sore, and very unclean, passed us. The Father put his arm through his. "Now, you are coming to us for the night, and you shall have a good dinner, a good bed, and a good breakfast. You will find some of your brethren are there at this moment. Oh, yes," said he. "*Anyone* can demand food and shelter of us. It is never refused." "Why, then," said I, "to establish monasteries throughout the country would go far to solve the chief problems of to-day." The Abbot flamed up into brilliant enthusiasm. "Why, of course, it would! Monasteries were never wanted as they are now. Look at Socialism, Anarchism, and the rest. What a magnificent proof of Christian Socialism monasteries would be. The union of different classes; all welded into one under Christ. Many young men and women could be spared from the marriageable world, from society, from business. They would find a channel for their activities quickly enough. If we had our monasteries back, the lands they once held for the poor would revert to the poor once again,



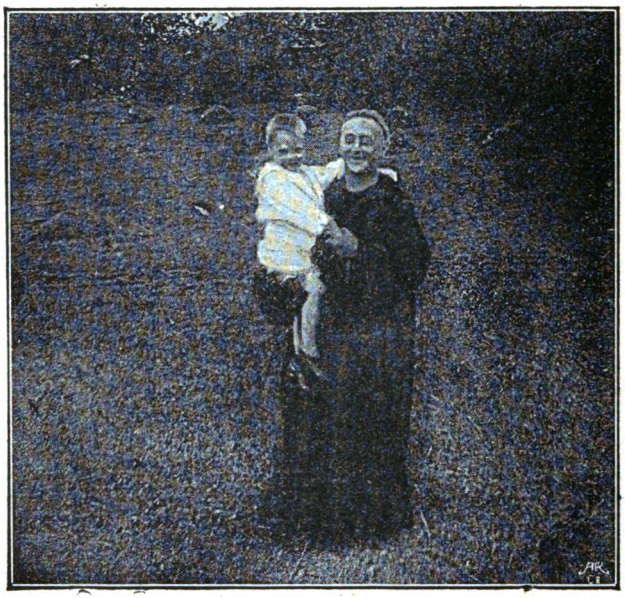
SHRINE AT HOLY BUSH.

the land question would be settled. The workhouses forced on us by Elizabeth when the monasteries were destroyed would become empty and useless. From a social, a religious, and a moral point of view the monastic life would be the greatest blessing. Fancy all the workhouse officials turned by a fairy wand into living monks and nuns, gentlemen and ladies working for the sake of Jesus Christ and his dear, poor people. How the people would flock to them! How hatred would be turned into love, for oh! how the poor hate the parish guardians, and the beadles, and the workhouse masters, and all the rest!

IN THE HAYFIELD.

And how the rates would go down! And from the society point of view what good it would do. Look at the marriage and the moral question in the upper classes. Look at the condition of our great public schools. I know and hear a vast amount, going about as I do. I come down suddenly flop on fashionable society, and then as suddenly I disappear. They tell me things—men and women—they wouldn't dare to tell their own parson. They talk as though it were impossible to maintain purity. How they can mouth or write the things they do I cannot conceive. Monasteries would change all that!"

By this time we had reached the Abbey. A little bare-headed boy rushed up to us. The Father took him in his arms and kissed him. "Dear Father," said the child—for that is how everyone addresses Ignatius at Llanthony—"Brother Bruno has been so naughty, he has killed a chicken." At this moment Brother Bruno—a beautiful St. Bernard—slowly and guiltily lolled round the corner. The child clambered down from the Father's shoulder, and encircled his little arms round the great, good-humoured beast's neck, the Abbot stood by, crook in hand, gazing smilingly on, some monks strolled slowly past, and a sweet-faced Sister-of-

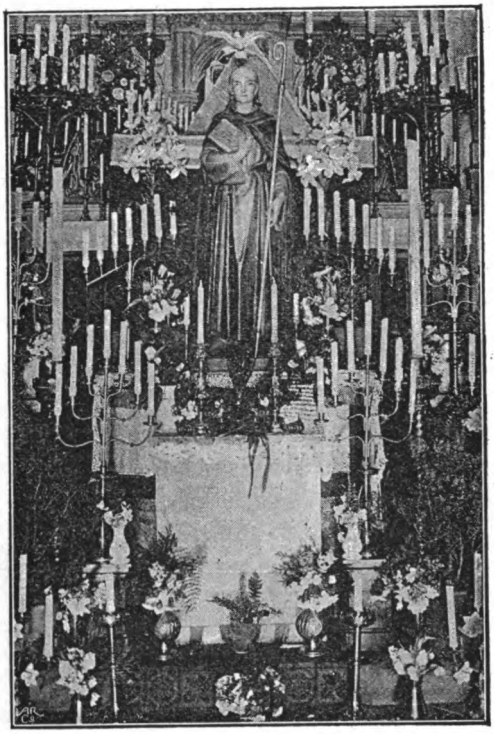


FATHER IGNATIUS AND WAIF.

Mercy joined the little group. It was a scene the simple beauty and pathos of which will never fade from my mind. "That little fellow," said the Father, "came to us literally from the gutter; he has no friends on earth but ourselves. But here I am bound to own he rules as absolute master." We strolled through the monastery. In the cloister stood a printing press, where all the printing work of the establishment is very skilfully done. I greatly admired the fireplace in the Father's own parlour, which is an exact imitation of the fireplace in the old Abbey of Llanthony, which stands by a stream a few miles down the valley. In the refectory a few of

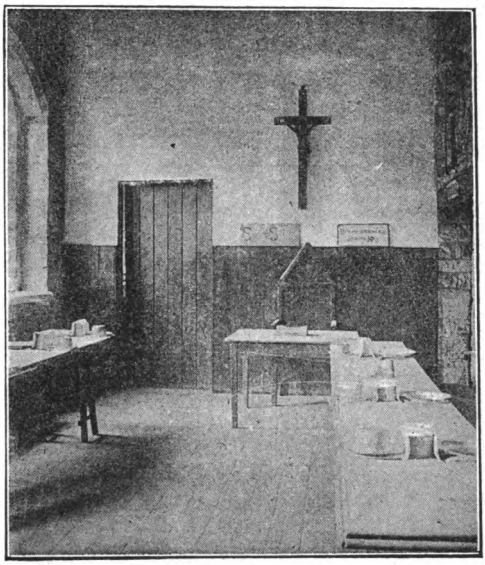
the monks sat reading. I asked the Father something about their studies and their recreation.

"Well," he replied, "they only read strictly orthodox books, unless they display a marked talent for argument. Dr. Pusey used to say that he read everything that was written against Christianity, but that he was never affected by it. But then there are not many Dr. Puseys in this world. They never read the newspapers. They know nothing of the news of the day. They don't know whether Victoria or Edward VII. is reigning, although I must tell you we are tremendously loyal people here. They have given up the world entirely. Why, do you know they can only see their female relations through a grating. The *professed* monk is cloistered, and cannot leave the grounds at all." "But don't they get dreadfully depressed at times?" "Sometimes one's feelings change temporarily, and one feels a terrible monotony. But then we serve best when we serve in spite of our feelings. Now and again one is a little down in the mouth, but it is only indigestion," merrily explained the Abbot; "but common sense tells that neither our vocation nor our salvation depends on our digestion." "Do they read no novels or stories?" I asked. "Only religious stories, no novels. They are fond of Montalembert's 'Monks of the West,' 'The Tudor Dynasty,' 'Savonarola.'" "Such a book as 'Robert Elsmere?'" I hazarded, "wouldn't



ST. DAVID'S SHRINE (PATRON OF THE ABBEY).

that give them a peep into contemporary thought?" "I wouldn't dream of allowing them to read such a work," was the vigorous reply. "I read it, of course. I have to read all those works. Preaching as I do everywhere, and to all sorts and conditions of people, I have to have modern thought at my fingers' ends. I read 'Robert Elsmere' and roared over it—the funniest book I have read for a long time. I have it all marked with my comments. Then they read biographies—Père Lacordaire for instance, Fénelon, Boissier, St. Francis de Sales, Alban Butler's 'Lives of the Saints,' and Baring Gould's also."



THE MONKS' REFECTORY.

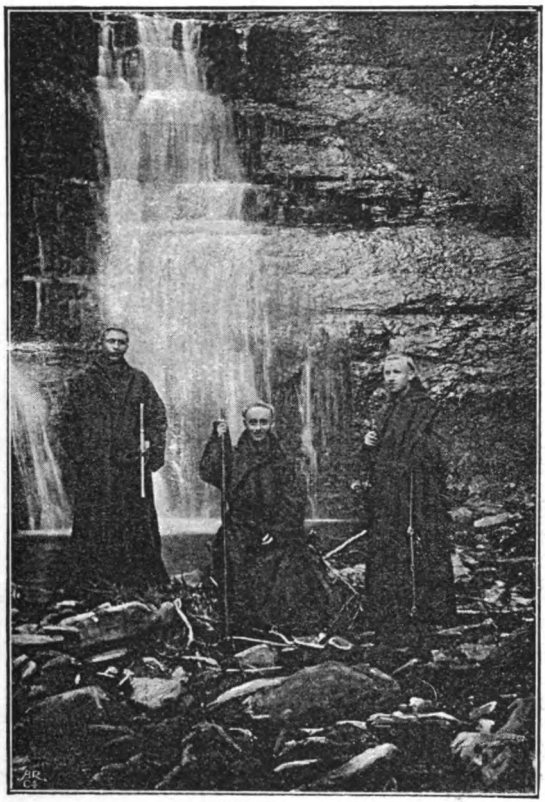
"But surely, Father Ignatius," said I, "these young men *ought* to know what is going on around them. They ought to be well up in the Thought of the day."

"My dear friend," very earnestly replied the good Monk, "we never allow ourselves to think. It is all decided for us. If we doubt one thing the whole thing must go. Don't talk rubbish to me about there being more faith in *honest* doubt than in half the creeds. It is all settled for us, and there is nothing to dispute."

"Then you don't believe in the New Criticism?" I rather hesitatingly remarked. The Father's face flamed up with sudden passion.

"I hate it, and if Mr. ——," naming one of the new lights in the critical world, "came into this room now, I feel as though I could tear him limb from limb. To think," he went on more calmly, "of a minister of Christ and of the Church turning traitor like that man. A downright, honest atheist I can understand and sympathise with. For instance, I knew and loved Bradlaugh. A dear good fellow, and as true and honest as the day; but for

Dean Stanley and many others I could name they are too dreadful for words." "Then," said I, "Monasticism and Modern Thought are irreconcilable—you neither acknowledge it nor are you influenced by it?" "Modern Thought!" cried the Monk, "Modern Thought! What is it? I will tell you. Moncure Conway, cultured, refined, æsthetic, goes to Canterbury Cathedral and speaks of the Archbishop as 'an amiable old gentleman who is paid £15,000 a year to promote the worship of a dead Jew!' A dead Jew! There, that is Modern Thought! I say in answer to that, as I look around and see what Christ has done for the world, 'Oh God! that we had a thousand such dead Jews.' Now, my dear brother, you ask me my opinion of Modern Thought. I will tell you. I read Renan, and were it not for the seriousness of the whole thing I could have cried with laughter over his nonsense. I have no logic in me, no Aristotelian power of reasoning, I never could do mathematics, I am very excitable; I am an enthusiast, a fanatic, but I do lay claim to a very plentiful possession of the Englishman's birthright of good, plain, common-sense. Renan begins and ends by saying no man was ever so magnificent a saint as Jesus Christ, and yet almost in the same breath he calls him a



AT THE WATERFALL.

vile impostor. How can so absurdly contradictory a writer as that shake the belief of centuries?

"Let us contrast the power of the world and that of Christ. Surely that will be an answer in itself to the enemies of Christianity. The manger of Christ promised little when compared with the magnificence of Tiberius Cæsar at Capri. The one is the power that is of God, the other is that of the world. Which lasts?

THE ABBEY.

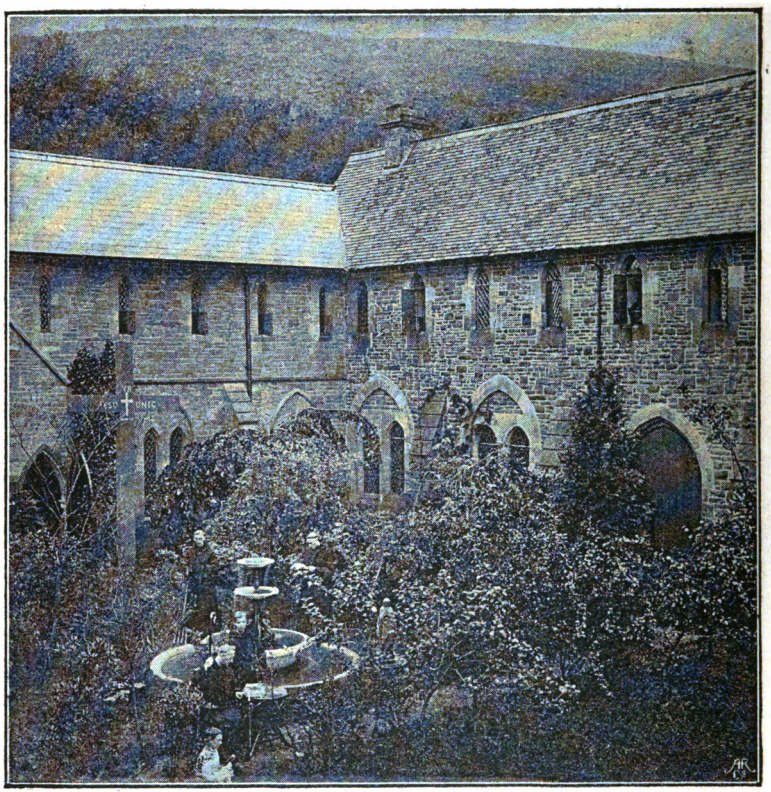
The ships of all the world come up the river of the greatest and most powerful city the world has ever known, and almost the first thing that catches the eyes of the crews, as it rears itself above the mists and weariness of the vast Babylon, is the Cross of Christ glittering in the sun. St. Paul's Cross is a testimony that even in worldly matters the power of Christ

to-day is greater than that of the world. The Bible, and the Bible only, tells us who and what Christ is, and I would believe the Bible if it said the moon was made of green cheese. No, I neither understand nor believe in your Modern Thought or New Criticism. Why, its professors themselves are changing daily, are for ever quarrelling among themselves. I am one with

HIGH FESTIVAL AT THE ABBEY.

General Booth there—who, by-the-bye, is one of my heroes—who you tell me believes in it as little as I do. What do I care for scientific research? What is science to the masses? I go to a poor dying man, and I tell him Norman Lockyer has just discovered a new star. What help is that to him as he lies gasping out his last breath? I regard the physical sciences as pretty toys,

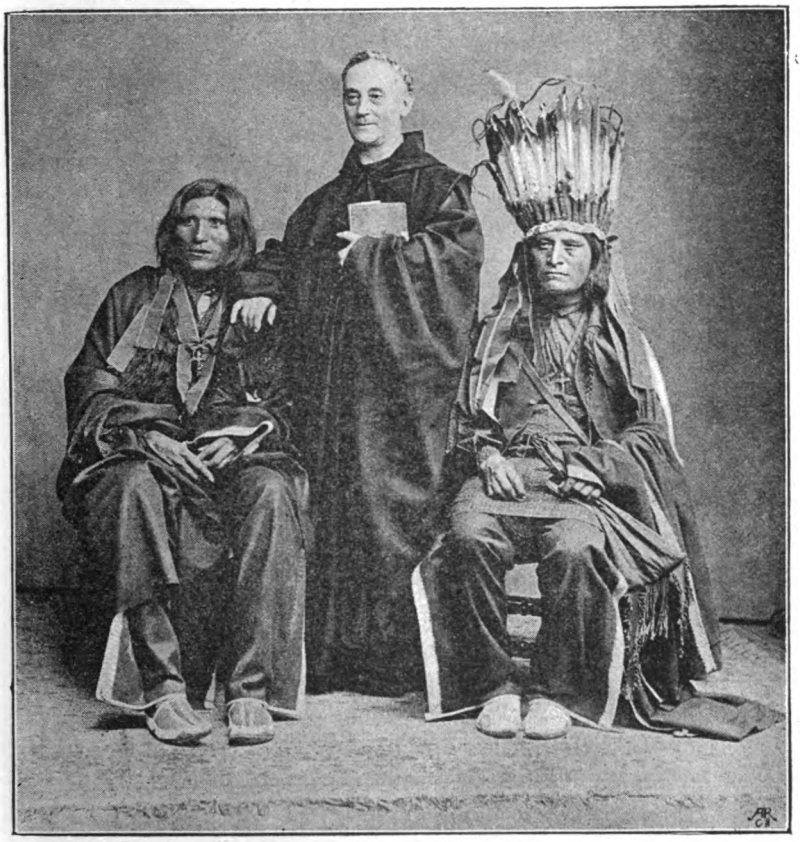
and all very well in their place, but their place is not in religion. As regards Modern Thought, pah! I am an utter and perfect fool, but yet I am in good company. St. Paul, clever, cultivated, refined, determined 'to know none among you save Jesus Christ.' Nor, indeed, do I find I require Modern Thought in my dealing with men, and especially cultivated men, of the world. I get a



CLOISTER GARTH.

very aristocratic audience; mostly men, hardly any women by comparison. And often I see tears rolling down the faces of men when the women sit quiet. I have sailors come to my meeting. They have gone away and changed a whole ship's crew by the force of their after lives. And in one such case twenty

men died of fever in a foreign land, and over their graves their companions placed the motto I had given them just before they sailed, and it is the motto of our life here at Llanthony, 'JESUS ONLY.'"



"HOOP HAWK" (Sioux). FATHER IGNATIUS "BLACK BULL (Sioux).

By the Late Philip Bourke Marston.

Illustrations by Richard Jack.

My cobbler cobbles over my head,
  Making and mending his boots and shoes,
And I go racking my brains, instead,
  For poems and stories that men won't use.

Could I make poems as he makes boots,
  Were sure of my money as he of his,
I'd buy a new hat, and of clothes three suits,
  And of wines the very best claret that is.

He brings his boots home to mend and polish;
  I bring my books, for a weekly journal—
Poor books to abuse, to review, and demolish,
  For editors like their critics infernal.

My cobbler thinks, if he had but time,
He would make for his sweetheart a pair of shoes ;
As I, for my lady, would make a rhyme,
If I could but live without writing reviews.

I wonder is cobbling, if I could know it,
The work of his choice—his pride and glory—
If so, he is better off than a poet
Who tries his hand at a magazine story.

Mrs. White-Smith's Afternoon Party.

By Henry W. Lucy. Illustrations by Hal Hurst.

"I THINK," said Mr. White-Smith ruefully, "it would be better to have it in the evening like other people do. Say for ten o'clock, and, if you like, you might add, 'Carriages may be ordered for twelve.'"

"I shouldn't like to do any such thing," said Mrs. White-Smith; "you are muddling things up in your usual inaccurate way. It's only for concerts, public entertainments, and negro minstrels that anything is said about the time for ordering carriages."

"THE WEDDING."

"Well, leave that out. Only if we do the thing at all, let us do it decently, with a band at the foot of the staircase and supper at the top, like they had it the other night at Mr. Gildmore's."

"And a pretty penny it would cost. Besides that's not at all the kind of thing that would suit us or our circumstances. I want the Dean to come, and Miss Skefferton, and that dear man from the House of Commons who has views on the Opium question. Of course, there's no objection to your bringing from the House as many of the smart young men as you can get. But my idea of the thing we should do, at least to begin with, is something intellectual and decorous. Some music perhaps; conversation, tea and coffee."

"A charming programme," said Mr. White-Smith, with the nearest approach to a chuckle possible in the presence of his wife. "With Miss Skefferton thrown in, I fancy it would prove irresistible to some of the men in the smoking-room."

"You may jeer as you like, Mr. White-Smith; but you know that, as a rule, you generally find me to have been correct in any views I may take of the right thing to do."

It was noticeable that in introducing her husband's name in casual conversation, Mrs. White-Smith forgot the hyphen, and the deliberation of enunciation it imposed. This was, in truth, the effect of old habit. Thirty years ago, when they were married, there was no hyphen to the family name. Mr. White-Smith was at that epoch head-clerk in a soap-boiling business, passing rich on £150 a year. The Tootem family, into which he married, rather looked down upon him. Not that their particular segment of the circle stood much higher in the social world, or was more richly endowed with property and income. But they had an uncle (on the mother's side) who was a vicar, a circumstance that spread over the family an effulgence of gentility up to which they felt bound to live.

Whether "our uncle, the vicar," would assist at the wedding was in its way, judging by the frequency with which it was discussed, of more momentous concern than any other prospect connected with the young couple.

The vicar, a plain, inoffensive man, subdued by the quarterly difficulty of making both ends meet when united by a small stipend, raised no objection. His appearance on the scene in church was, the Tootems always said, the foundation of John White-Smith's fortune. However that be, from the day of his marriage John steadily prospered, became a partner in the firm, and, in due course, sole proprietor of a business which, in moments of confidence, he admitted was better than brewing.

The hyphen, evolved out of her own consciousness, was only one of the forms in which Mrs. White-Smith's ambition developed itself. Her husband would have been well content to jog along the round of business life, spend the day with his ledgers and his vats at the works, and go to sleep with a silk handkerchief over his face after an early dinner. But Mrs. White-Smith had other views. She felt that if John was not cut out for public life, she was. Being a practical woman, she commenced by elbowing him into the local Town Council, and seemed to have reached the height of her ambition when he was for two years in succession elected Mayor.

Appetite grows with what it feeds upon. Mrs. White-Smith was acquainted with the career of an ex-Mayor of a neighbouring town. He had commenced much on the same lines as the Mayor

of Bradfield. But after serving an apprenticeship to public life in the useful school of the municipality he had gone into Parliament, and had, with a speed that showed how easy the course was, risen to the position of Cabinet Minister. Mrs. White-Smith was, at first, not quite certain about her husband compelling the instant attention of the House of Commons, and a little later taking his seat at the Cabinet Council. But when she married him the prospect of the Mayoralty of Bradfield was equally remote. She had done marvels for him already, and was not easily cowed. He was, personally, popular with his townsfolk, could afford to stand a contested election, and it should be done.

"WORE A GOLD CHAIN."

It was done accordingly, and at the General Election of 1892 John White-Smith was returned to the House of Commons at the head of the poll as member for the West End of Bradfield.

At the outset there had been a little difficulty, which John's latent stubbornness threatened to make fatal. When he first offered himself as a candidate for a seat in the Town Council he had worn Liberal colours. A working man himself, he was proud to say, architect of his own fortunes, he was, naturally, ranged in opposition to the aristocracy, and had strong views on the question of unearned increment. In this position he was warmly supported by his wife, who instinctively recognised the fitness of things.

Somehow, when he came to be Mayor, wore a gold chain, and presided over meetings at the Town Hall and elsewhere, Mr. White-Smith's views mellowed. Before the second year of his Mayoralty had closed they grew decidedly mellower. Mrs. White-Smith, in her semi-official capacity, had been occasionally brought upon speaking terms with some of the county people. Twice she had taken her husband to the Mansion House ball

given by the Lord Mayor to the provincial mayors. After that glimpse of the highest and most exclusive paradise of London social life, she had become a changed woman, and saw, as in a flash of lightning, the danger of unbridled democracy.

As the greater includes the less, it is superfluous to say that John White-Smith also changed. Probably no man can, two years in succession, be mayor of his native town without drawing away from his older, humbler self. John honestly fought against the tendency to put on airs. After all he was human, and, with Mrs. White-Smith ever at hand, he began to see the great gulf fixed between himself and his earlier associates.

In local politics he still ranked as a Liberal, though Mrs. White-Smith always said family influence and tendencies made her a Whig. Then came the cataclysm in political parties out of which was born that blessed word Unionist. Mrs. White-Smith saw her opportunity at once. The Mayor (John was Mayor for the second time in 1886) became a Unionist. As Mrs. White-Smith explained to people whom she visited, there was no change in Mr. White-Smith's political convictions or position. He had not left the Liberal Party. He was where he had always been. It was they who had drifted away from beneath the folds of the Old Flag.

Thus it came to pass that when John White-Smith stood as candidate for Bradfield, he was returned for the aristocratic quarter of the town. All the local nobility and gentry voted for him, placing him in the proud position of heading the poll.

As soon as the figures were declared, even whilst the crowd were cheering, and John White-Smith, nervously clutching at his right bosom under the temporary impression that he was touching his heart, bowed his thanks, Mrs. White-Smith made up her mind on one point. It did not matter about the first Session of the new Parliament. Meeting in August, it would last only for a week or two, and she would be content to share apartments with John at an hotel. But in the next Session she would have a house in London, and would "see people." She was, as has been mentioned, a practical woman, content to begin at the beginning. Just as she had commenced with John at the Town Council, so leading him on to the House of Commons, she was now ready to begin her first season by taking a furnished house, growing thence into a house of her own, in which she would establish a *salon*, where, at least one evening a week through the season, she would gather all that was best and brightest in London Society.

This takes some time to tell. But Mrs. White-Smith's mind moved as rapidly as Alnascher's, and she saw it all whilst the cheering outside the Town Hall, where the votes had been counted, was still ringing in her entranced ears, and Mr. White-Smith, with parched lips and spasmodic smile, was still bowing his acknowledgment.

"BOWING HIS ACKNOWLEDGMENT."

The earliest stages of her plan of campaign came about as she had arranged them—as, indeed, most things did. It was characteristic of Mr. White-Smith that on the first occasion of his wife's entertaining, laying as it were the foundation stone of the *salon* of the future, he should, as he coarsely put it, have desired to "go the whole hog"—an evening party, with a band at the foot of the staircase and a supper at the top. Mrs. White-Smith was constitutionally prone to proceed by slow degrees. She liked, as she said, to feel her feet. As the season advanced, her husband would have no occasion to reproach her for the modesty of her social plans. But she would start in a quiet way.

One thing that especially influenced her and directed the course of events was the accidental presence in town of the Dean of Paulborough. He had come up for a fortnight, bringing his wife and three daughters, who had graciously called on the member's wife, and had been entertained by many reminiscences of Mrs. White-Smith's uncle, now long dead—so far gone before, indeed, that Mrs. White-Smith had promoted him to a Canon's stall. Mr. White-Smith was visibly surprised when he heard her talking about "my uncle the Canon." Mrs. White-Smith saw he was

about to say something, and stared at him so coldly that his observation, whatever it might have been, subsided into an almost inaudible whistle.

The party, she decided, should be for the Dean and his family, and around him should be gathered a specially selected company, such as would be gratifying to the Dean and would be appreciated by Mrs. White-Smith's other county friends. Mr. White-Smith's preference for the evening party of course came to nothing. It was arranged that cards should be sent out, announcing that Mrs. White-Smith was "At Home" from four to seven. She relied chiefly on her own gifts as a hostess, and on the intellectual field open to cultivation in the company. But it was just as well to have something else, and nothing could be more respectable than music.

At an evening party at a really good house, where through the friendly action of the Whip the new member for Bradfield and his wife had been bidden, Mrs. White-Smith had found the Andalusian Minstrels, who at intervals broke in on the buzz of conversation by twanging the light guitar, or singing the songs of the Guadalquiver. They were picturesquely dressed, and, though she did not understand Spanish, she was sure that at Lady Chumley's nothing save the unexceptionable would be permitted. The minstrels were one of the hits of the still young season, and were a little dear, but that did not matter. With the fame of Saponacious Soap and its attractive legend ("Won't Wash Anything") flashing from the walls of every railway station in the United Kingdom, an item of £10 or even £25 was nothing.

Mrs. White-Smith engaged the Andalusian Minstrels, and there remained only the mustering of the company. The Dean was, of course, the principal attraction. The Dean had, as he pleasantly said, taken the liberty of bringing with him a young curate, the Rev. Stilus Sparks, whose attention to the Dean's eldest daughter, a mature young lady of thirty-five, was marked. Mr. White-Smith had utterly failed in his apportioned duty of bringing up from the House of Commons some of its more distinguished men. He explained that, as public business now commenced at half-past three, and the question hour often ran to five o'clock, it was inconvenient to be absent from the post of duty.

"Perhaps some of them will come later," he said lightly.

Mr. Bateman was there, the well-known member whose constituency at Duxley was not nearly large enough for his

sympathies. These embraced mankind, and were specially drawn towards the hapless populations of the Far East, who, instead of drinking whiskey and thrashing their wives, smoked opium and went to sleep. There were some forty others present, less known

"SINGING THE SONGS OF THE GUADALQUIVER."

to fame, chiefly ladies. Miss Skefferton had brought her nephew, a youth of nine, who connected afternoon entertainments with cakes and ices, and looking forlornly round the room, and seeing nothing to eat, wondered when the entertainment would begin.

The morning's post had brought to Mrs. White-Smith a message that would have damped the energy of an ordinary woman. It was from the manager of the Andalusian Minstrels, and announced that the troupe had been commanded to appear at an afternoon party given by one of the Royal Princesses. The writer was in despair at the prospect of disappointing the amiable lady, but if she would permit him he would provide a substitute. A troupe of compatriots had just arrived from Madrid, and were anxious to obtain a footing in London drawing-rooms. These he ventured to recommend to the Senora.

There was nothing for Mrs. White-Smith but to telegraph acceptance of this offer. The troupe itself had arrived at noon to take a preliminary view of the stage of operations. It consisted of three ladies, one stout dame and two rather pretty girls, presumably her daughters. Indeed, the whole concern was a matter of presumption as far as intercourse went. The troupe could speak only a few words of English, whilst opportunities enjoyed at Bradfield had not put either Mr. or Mrs. White-Smith in the way of acquiring the Spanish tongue. Fortunately, Mr. White-Smith was staying in for luncheon, and, as he told his wife later as they sat at the meal, he had got along capitally with the ladies. They had, somehow, made it clear to him that it would be necessary for the success of the piece that a recess leading out by the further door of the drawing-room should be curtained.

Mr. White-Smith, who was in unusually high spirits, could not explain exactly how he knew what was required of him. But, as he said, the Spanish ladies, especially the elderly stout one, had very expressive eyes, and what with their use, signs, and smiles, and an occasionally guessed-at English word, they got on famously.

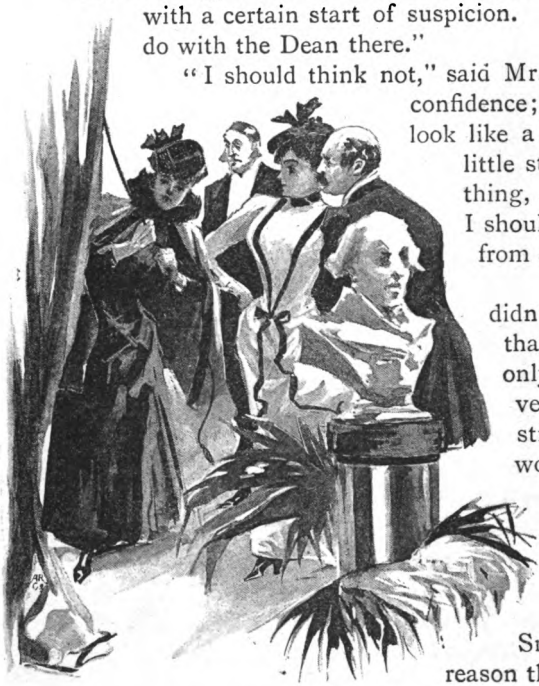
Mr. Mullett, the butler, was called in to help, and, though a staid man, much after the pattern of his master, he entered thoroughly into the enjoyment of the performance, and proved most useful. A pair of curtains were rigged up across the recess. The stout Senora, withdrawing, clapped her hands thrice, and the two younger ladies showed Mr. White-Smith and the butler how, by pulling a cord which the girls had arranged, the curtains might be simultaneously withdrawn, displaying the interior of the smaller room.

The whole thing went beautifully, and Mr. White-Smith was sorry when it really was over, and he went down to a delayed luncheon.

"What are they going to do, John?" Mrs. White-Smith asked.

"I couldn't quite catch. I fancy it's music, and perhaps singing."

"No dancing, I trust?" said Mrs. White-Smith, looking up with a certain start of suspicion. "That would never do with the Dean there."



"THE TWO YOUNGER LADIES SHOWED HOW."

"I should think not," said Mr. White-Smith, with confidence; "the mother doesn't look like a dancing woman—a little stout for that sort of thing, and, as for the girls, I should say they are fresh from a convent."

Mrs. White-Smith didn't particularly like that reference. She had only a vague idea of conventual habits, but instinctively felt they would not be in consonance with the Dean's views.

There was nothing more to be got out of Mr. White-Smith, for the sufficient reason that he knew nothing.

"I expect," said Mrs. White-Smith, with comfortable assurance, "that these Spanish troupes are all the same, with their tambourines, guitars, bright-coloured ribbons and black hair. Only I wish the Andalusian Minstrels were coming, as we have seen them and know their skirts almost cover their ankles."

At five o'clock the drawing-room was quite full, conversation was beginning to flag, and all eyes were turned towards the veiled recess, behind which voices were heard eagerly whispering in a foreign tongue. Movement was going forward, which suggested the re-arrangement of furniture. Then the twanging of a guitar was heard.

"Ah!" said the Dean, who had read on the card of invitation that the Andalusian Minstrels were expected, "how pleasant that

sounds! It reminds me, my dear," he added, turning to his wife, "of a holiday I once made in Spain before I took orders."

At five o'clock the performance was to commence, and Mr. White-Smith casually took up his place at one side of the curtain, and dallied with the cord that would presently pull it back. Mullett posted himself on the other side, waiting for the signal.

Miss Skefferton's nephew had by this time grown into a state of ungovernable excitement. Tea was to be served in the interval after the first performance, and as yet there were no visible signs of it. The boy, prowling round the room, had assured himself that there was nothing in sight to eat or drink. Probably all the good things were stored behind the curtain, at which he saw everyone looking. Dodging round behind the crowd of guests, the youth, evading Mr. White-Smith's regard, lightly lifted one side of the curtain and peeped in. Swiftly he ran back to his aunt, and, amid a lull in the conversation, Mrs. White-Smith heard him whisper:

"A STOUT LADY IN VERY SHORT SKIRTS."

"Auntie, they've got nothing on."

At that moment hands behind the curtain were sharply clapped thrice, and, Mr. White-Smith and the butler pulling together, the curtains were swiftly drawn back.

From the crowded group in the front drawing-room there went up to the outraged ceiling a gasp, an agonised indrawing and expulsion of breath, such as might have followed had they been suddenly soused with buckets of cold water. The sound was eloquently varied by a subdued shriek from Miss Skefferton. Her youthful nephew had been betrayed into inaccuracy in the description volunteered by him of the situation. The performers on the improvised stage were certainly dressed. But it was after the manner of acrobats.

When the curtain was withdrawn there was discovered in the centre, close by where the footlights would have appropriately flickered, a stout lady in very short skirts, abundantly displaying

flesh-coloured tights. Her right leg was gracefully advanced. She held in her hands a guitar, which she lightly twanged, regarding the frozen audience the while with what was intended to be a bewitching smile. Her eye alighting on Mr. White-Smith, standing at his post by the curtain on the left of the stage, she gaily blew him a kiss from the tips of her fingers, and once more touched the light guitar.

The audience, though paralysed by the unexpected scene, could not resist a feeling of curiosity at one development of it. Whilst the stout lady was in full view, posturing in front of the stage, the Dean, who had a place of honour in the front, became conscious of two pairs of legs, also in tights, apparently pendant from the ceiling. What ever there might be above was concealed by the heavy beam across the top of the recess. The stout lady, withdrawing her attention from Mr. White Smith, and turning it upon the Dean as evidently a principal person in the audience, nods saucily to him, and coquettishly passes her hand over the guitar.

"VERY DISTRESSING,' THE DEAN MURMURED."

At this signal the two young ladies, who had been perilously perched on the cornice of the window in the recess, lightly dropped to the floor, an apparition at which the stout lady dramatically displayed much astonishment, conveying to the Dean by waving hands, wreathed smiles, and sharp twangs of the guitar, the idea that the young persons had dropped from the clouds. Having reached *terra firma* the young ladies proceeded to execute a series of energetic steps, pirouetting round the stout lady, who, having mastered her astonishment, played the guitar with extraordinary vigour.

No word had yet been spoken by the audience. Mr. White-Smith still stood to the right of the stage, open-mouthed, stonily gazing at Mullett, the only person in the room who seemed to be

taking an intelligent interest in the performance. The Dean sat with one hand partially obscuring his vision. As for the curate, he slowly sidled round till the presentation of a back view of his head frustrated the evident intention of the stout lady to include him in her distribution of favours.

Meanwhile, the guitar was thrummed to quicker time, and the two young ladies pirouetted with increased pertinacity and vigour, finally posing on one knee on either side of the stout lady, who held out her hands to the audience with a charming gesture deprecatory of the storm of applause she evidently expected would follow.

"This is very distressing," the Dean murmured, looking at Mrs. White-Smith, between the fingers of the hand still held to his face.

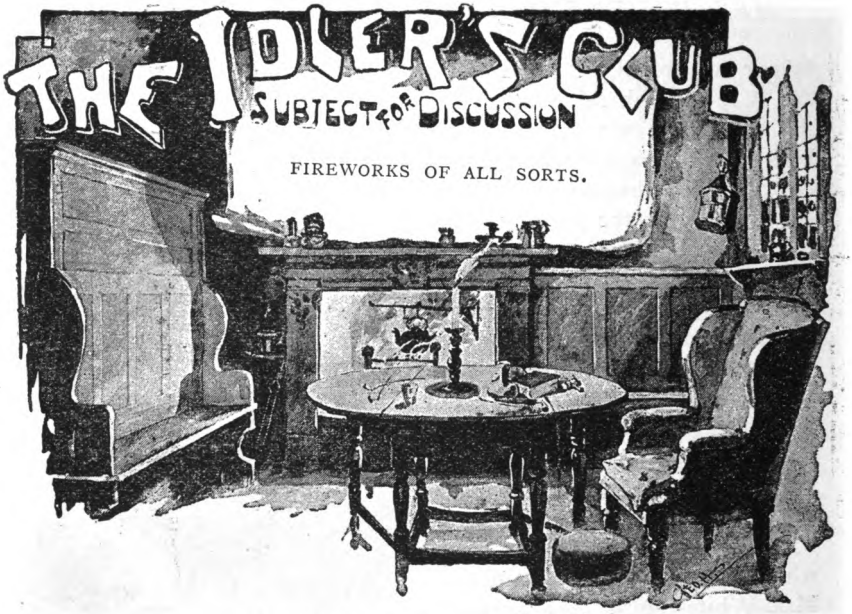
This remark broke the spell which held the hapless audience. Mrs. White-Smith, rushing to the front and waving her arms aloft like an inspired prophetess, shrieked—

"Go away! go away! You—you—things. Mr. White-Smith! Mullett! Why don't you pull the curtain?"

"'GO AWAY! YOU—YOU—THINGS.'"

Thus adjured, Mr. White-Smith and the butler between them, by frantic effort, dragged the curtain across the recess. Mr. Bateman, M.P., will never forget the faces and figures of the three Spaniards staring at each other, and at the vanishing audience in pained bewilderment. It was their first experience of a London drawing-room, and they thought the company had suddenly gone mad.

The Dean behaved very well, insisting on staying to have a cup of tea, an example followed by some of the others. But the function was cut short by Mrs. White-Smith going off into hysterics. Her health was so seriously affected that, under medical advice, she straightway proceeded to the seaside. The house at Queen's Gate was re-let, and the pursuit of Mrs. White-Smith's general plan of taking her place in London Society, and ultimately founding a *salon*, is postponed.



Zangwill letteth them off.

It is difficult to imagine festivity without fireworks, and yet there must have been a time when rockets did not rise or Catherine wheels go round. You cannot have fireworks without gunpowder, and every schoolboy knows that gunpowder was only invented in—I haven't got a dictionary of dates handy. Surely we ought to let off fireworks on Roger Bacon's birthday. "They let off fireworks when he was born," say the French in a slyly witty proverb, which is a circumlocutory way of saying that a man won't set the Thames on fire. For "he has not invented gunpowder" is the French equivalent for this idiom of ours, and it is obvious to the meanest intellect that a man whose birth was celebrated by fireworks could not have been the inventor of gunpowder. And yet there were fireworks of a kind from the earliest times, from the first appearance of stars in the firmament with their wandering habits and shooting expeditions. And, indeed, did not humanity long regard the heavens as a firework show for its amusement, a set piece entirely for its delectation? Mankind has always been fond of playing with fire—ever since Prometheus stole it from heaven and burnt his fingers. I am convinced the ancients only used bonfires for messages so as to enjoy the flare-up on the mountains. Who would not fight when summoned by a tongue of flame?

"And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle."

Roman candles were unknown to the Romans, but they enjoyed themselves with torches, and these were the fireworks at wedding fêtes. The golden rain in which Jupiter wooed Danae was another sort of hymeneal fireworks. There were fireworks at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The love of fireworks is a natural passion. Does not nature amuse herself with fireworks, especially on tropical summer nights? She loves to flash her lightnings (which are not to be put out by the rain), and to crash her thunder (which as everybody knows is only the report of the meeting of two electric clouds). And who does not admire her grand pyrotechnic display—twice daily—at sunrise and at sunset, or her celebrated local effect, the Aurora Borealis?

* * * *

I always loved fireworks from boyhood, and would rather have had dry bread and fireworks than cake with jam. I have put crackers under doors, and I have listened with demoniac joy to the shrieks from behind. But I can honestly say I have never tied cats to them. I was always economical with cats. I have seen fireworks at the Britannia Theatre, or at least I should have seen them if they had not filled the house with sulphurous smoke; and I have listened to the long-drawn ecstatic "aw" of the Crystal Palace crowd. I have even written a poem on fireworks. Here it is:—

And scatters them in all directions.

A dazzling fiery show of sphery rainbows,
Whereof each wonder, monarch of a moment,
Yields up its glory to the next one's splendour,
And sadly sinks into the arms of darkness.

Is it not a true simile of the favour of the fickle crowd? The most brilliant phenomena are forgotten after a moment. Life and Time are full of such fireworks—religions, philosophies, fashions, dynasties. And overhead the sure stars shine on. In literature fireworks rarely last. They are too clever to live. A humble rushlight lasts longer. "All fireworks are unsound," says Steinitz. He is talking of chess, and chess is very much like life. Whistler has painted fireworks—I mean literally—in his blue and silver nocturne of old Battersea Bridge. Tennyson has painted them in his "Welcome to Alexandra" and elsewhere.

Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire!
Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and higher,
Melt into stars for the land's desire!

"Sudden rocket." How good the adjective is! A poet I know spent half a day in finding the correct epithet for rockets, and was equally pleased and annoyed to discover subsequently that he had chosen the same adjective as the Master.

Tracy describes a Christian Rocket.

His Christian name—that is, the name used by Christians in addressing him—was Rocky; natives called him Sahib, and his other name doesn't matter. Rocky was short for Rocket, so you see your first idea was wrong. Existence was to him a series of startling experiences. As soon as he commenced to think—in other words, when he left Sandhurst—he adopted the philosophy of sensation, and if he hadn't been in the army he would have found immediate employment at the Crystal Palace. He was great at limelight effects. One night he used the angle of refraction in such manner as to cause the senior major to apply for six months' leave by the first post, whilst Mrs. Captain Trevor had to explain an unaccountable fainting fit. Another time he won a sham fight by fixing up the heliograph, and making the enemy's horse gunners pound their own side's flank attack, but these things did not endear him to commanding officers. On the evening of the regimental cup day he used to organise a display of fireworks for the Tommies, and, from all accounts, the set pieces were something worth seeing. On the last occasion he managed to show so exactly how the general's charger threw that gallant soldier on parade that he was forthwith posted to a detachment on duty somewhere near the Pamirs.

* * * *

And what came of it.

Here he turned his attention to parachuting. But he brought in the pyrotechnic business by letting off showers of blue, white, and red stars during a midnight descent, demonstrating, by setting fire to the mules' stables, how to destroy an enemy's camp. Rocky dropped successively from heights of five, six, and ten thousand feet. The last time he lost his balloon, and balloons come expensive, so he was stopped for a time. Then he evolved his great idea, which was to drop from a height of 25,000 feet and carry up sufficient fireworks in weight which, if converted into nitro-glycerine, would serve to wipe off the map half a kingdom of average size. The Intelligence Department would not lend him a balloon, so the other chaps sold a few ponies to buy one, as they thought the affair would be remarkable in many respects. It was simply astounding in one. He started about 11.30 p.m. with an aneroid barometer attached to his wrist, and a car full of Roman candles, Catherine wheels, and other *divertissements*. These were to shoot out in all directions the moment he registered 25,000 feet above sea level. A few seconds later there was to be a

grand cataract of coloured stars, and through it all would descend the parachute in the semblance of a golden sun. Fellows had come in from miles around, and a big crowd strained their eyes through the cold, clear sky to catch a last glimpse of the rapidly disappearing balloon. Seven minutes was his estimated time for the ascent, and precisely at 11.36 min. 57 secs., by the junior subaltern's stop-watch, there was an astounding explosion a long way up. Suns, stars, and gigantic squibs lit the firmament over a large arc, and the ultramarine vault of heaven was studded with points of silver and gold. Nothing else happened. There is a memorial vase in the Mess, inscribed "Fireworks."

* * * *

Gribble looks on the dark side of fireworks.

Our pessimistic generation is continually discovering that something or other is "a sad sight." Thomas Carlyle long since passed this sweeping criticism on the Milky Way. Without a tittle of evidence, and in defiance of the opinion of the best astronomers, he appears to have assumed that its component stars were packed with teeming multitudes, all distracted, like himself, by dyspepsia and domestic incompatibilities. Our *décadent* poets delight to cultivate melancholy on empty wine-glasses and cigar stumps; and one modern singer, at all events, has told us of a carpenter who "wept like anything to see such quantities of sand." Is it not time, then, that someone steeled his heart and looked upon the dark side of fireworks?

* * * *

Particularly fireworks let off to celebrate a wedding.

I have noticed, for example, that fireworks are much in evidence on all joyous occasions, such as Royal weddings. In the morning we have a little music—the church bells playing scales while the military bands are playing wedding marches. In the evening there are flights of rockets and showers of golden rain—which would be called golden rice if the pyrotechnists had a proper sense of pretty imagery—and set pieces libelling the personal appearance of the bridegroom and the bride. One wonders whether there is not sometimes a cynic standing in the crowd who wants to know whether the display is intended to symbolise the wedded life. "With fireworks," one can suppose him saying, "there is first of all the glorious blaze of light and colour, dazzling the eyes so that they can see nothing else, and spurring the soul to all sorts of delirious imaginings. But then, after a few ecstatic moments, all is over,

and there is nothing left but darkness and smoke, and evil smells, and smuts falling on your face. And so with married life. It opens with the peal of organs and the clash of bells, the clink of glasses, the garnering of gifts, and the tumult of multitudinous congratulations. But this endures but for a moon—a honeymoon—and then follow incompatibilities, and the visit of the mother-in-law, and the struggle for life, and poverty coming in by the door, and love flying out by the window." So might he argue, not so *much* by reason of his cynicism as because he has a sense of humour, and a keen eye for analogies and incongruities which it is the happy convention of the world in general to disregard.

* * * *

Phillpotts makes them.

I shall leave subtle examination of fireworks to the Club. Others may talk of human rockets and the sort of men who go about the world, under the impression they are "set pieces" for the perpetual admiration of their fellows; but, for my part, real pyrotechny will occupy me. I have in my mind a display given by myself when twelve years of age or less. Doctor Adam Norris, my schoolmaster in those days, knowing that I was a past-master in chemistry, and an adept at the manufacture of coloured fires, directed me to organise an entertainment for one memorable fifth of November in the playground. He was one of those people who see no reason why Gunpowder Treason should ever be forgot. The old gentleman is gone now, where there may or may not be fireworks, but to his dying day he never appreciated my efforts on his behalf. It was proposed to illuminate the playground with coloured fires and lanterns, to invite the parents of the thirty scholars, and to regale them after the display with cake and wine—I mean, of course, the parents. I was let off my evening lessons for a week, and allowed the run of the school laboratory. There I revelled in preparations. Not content with mere red, blue, and yellow fires, I arranged Catherine wheels and Roman candles and rockets. I felt the instincts of a Brock and a Pain rising in me; I even asked Doctor Norris for an additional half-sovereign, telling him that I had an idea for a splendid novelty. He trusted me, taking the word of our chemistry master that I knew what I was doing. My novelty, which I kept as a grand surprise, consisted of a "set piece," with the words—

"GOD BLESS
DOCTOR ADAM NORRIS."

This benign wish would come out in red fire, and subsequently change to green, if all went well. The night arrived, and the company. The preliminary illumination was not entirely successful, as my assistants did not understand their business, but the first Catherine wheel went round several times, and appeared to be well liked. Owing to some unfortunate miscalculation with

the materials, my rockets would not soar. The spirit was willing, the chemical compound was weak. So they tore about the ground, like snakes, and hissed in among the company, and one let off purple stars under the petticoat of a lady whose twins were in our sixth form. A solitary rocket really went up a considerable distance, and the stick fell through the cucumber-frame of a man next door, who had always been unfriendly towards the school. I pass by the hot-air balloon. It soared all right, but I forgot to tie on the magnesium light, so nobody realised what a fine thing was being done. The Roman candles passed off without adverse comment, and then I lighted the "set piece." You will not believe what happened. Nobody ever has credited the story, though I have told it to thousands. The facts, however, are these: Owing to unforeseen circumstances, the first two words of the display—those asking God to bless our good master—did not light at all; the next word, "DOCTOR," fell off altogether; the "A" in "ADAM" also failed; and the whole of our preceptor's surname, excepting the initial letter, blew up. What was the result? Why, against the black night, raised on supports some twenty feet above the heads of the bewildered assembly, there blazed forth a solitary, fiery, colossal

"D A M N."

It burnt red, and then, in a silence that could be felt, turned green. The "Damn" and I turned green together. That ended the entertainment. People never believe this story; indeed, at so great a distance of time I should be inclined to doubt it myself, but I cannot forget the subsequent interview with my dear old master in his study. We had a little private display of fireworks all to ourselves. Thus do most improbable effects result from remote causes. The Chinese, by inventing fireworks, were doing a thing which, after long generations of time, rendered it impossible for me to sit down with any comfort for a week.

* * * *

Paddon doesn't like fireworks.

A serious disadvantage in fireworks is that they are quite as much your neighbours as your own, in the matter of gratification derived. There can be only a few instances of this fact more annoying than that of the man who has quarrelled with the street on both sides of him, and then elects to give an exhibition of fireworks. His enemies flock out and enjoy the whole thing hugely, down to the damp ones that won't go off, and the tricky ones that burn his fingers and make him swear. Nevertheless, there *are* a few instances even more irritating than this; for example, a political fête with fireworks, at which the other persuasions, having congregated on the borders of the grounds, gaze long, pay nothing, and jeer derisively and critically when anything fails to please them in devices or mottoes. Or again, temperance fireworks, in regard to which inebriates, in character, occupy a like relative position.

Such situations are very galling. It's no use trying to turn rockets on the offenders, because rockets are impatient of control, and invariably hurt the man who fools with them. The simple fact remains that the man who pays for fireworks, and lets them off, gets all the danger, all the smell, and all the expense, while unsolicited attendance, at a distance, sees better than anyone else, with no responsibilities or risks to cloy its enjoyment.

* * * *

But thinks them funny in daylight.

Fireworks in broad daylight are decidedly funny. I once saw an old Turkish gentleman in a fez, and a hot sun, put what he conceived to be the finishing touches to a set piece in some public gardens. He was mocked of fate, for there came along a little boy in a fez, who supplemented him with a fuzee. Then that set piece, without realising what an ass it was making of itself, began to splutter sickly-coloured loyalty and patriotism and portraits, for which there was no immediate demand, in a sunlight that would have cheapened Paradise, till the old Turk came back and burnt himself in a vain attempt to restrain its premature energy.

* * * *

And tells a story.

As to burning, fireworks are sometimes dangerous. I can easily call to mind a disposition of fireworks over a frail scaffolding many feet from the ground. The exhibitors were short-handed, and a little late, so the crowd was rude to them out of the darkness. This probably flurried them, but at last the surface of the structure was gorgeously illumined. Presently, the people began to laugh, for it was seen that one of the men had been left on the top railing when the others had lit up. Spectators do not consider fireworks dangerous, and everyone laughed immoderately as the man clambered clumsily down through the showers of coloured fire. I daresay I laughed as heartily as anyone, because I have a mean kind of pain about the left ribs now when I think of what happened; for the poor wretch ceased to wriggle funnily, and finished the last half of his descent with a thud. He had been literally scorched to death when they picked him up.

* * * *

Jerome recalls an incident.

Once upon a time there lived a little boy who was very clever. He could take an expensive eight-day clock to pieces, and make out of it a toy steamboat. It was not, when made, very much of a steamboat—that one is bound to admit—but, notwithstanding, it *was* a steamboat, and, taking into consideration the difficulties of the task—the inadaptability of eight-day clock machinery to steamboat requirements, and the necessity of getting the work accomplished quickly, before conservatively-minded people with no enthusiasm for science could interfere—a good enough steamboat. With merely an ironing-board and a dozen meat skewers, he would—provided the ironing-board was not missed in time—turn you out quite a

practicable rabbit-hutch. He would make a gun out of an umbrella and a gas-bracket, which, if it was not so accurate as a Martini-Henry, was, at all events, more deadly. With half the garden hose, a copper scalding-pan out of the dairy, and a few Dresden china ornaments off the drawing-room mantelpiece, he would manufacture a really elegant little fountain for the garden. He could make book-shelves out of kitchen tables, and cross-bows out of crinolines. He took in *Cassell's Popular Recreator*, and learned how to dam a stream so that all the water would flow over the croquet lawn ; and how to make red paint and oxygen gas, together with many other such-like commodities useful to a boy. Among other things, he learned how to make fireworks, and, after a few explosions of an unimportant character, came to make them very well indeed. The boy who can play a good game of cricket is liked. The boy who can fight well is respected. The boy who can cheek a master is loved. But the boy who can make fireworks is revered above all others as a boy belonging to a superior order of beings. The fifth of November was at hand, and, with the consent of an indulgent mother, he determined to give to the world a proof of his powers. A large party of friends, relatives, and schoolmates was invited, and for a fortnight beforehand the scullery was converted into a manufactory for fireworks, and the whole house smelt of sulphur and gunpowder, and the female servants went about in hourly terror of their lives. By the day before all was in readiness, and samples were tested to make sure that no *contretemps* should occur the following night. All was found to be perfect. The rockets rushed heavenward and descended in stars, the Roman candles tossed their fiery balls into the darkness, the Catherine wheels sparkled and whirled, the crackers banged, and the squibs hissed. He went to bed a proud and happy boy, and dreamed of Fame. He stood surrounded by blazing fireworks, and the vast crowd cheered him, and all his relations, who he knew regarded him as a fool, were there to see his triumph, and Dicky Bowles, who laughed at him because he couldn't throw straight, and the girl at the bun-shop. The night of the festival arrived, and with it the guests. They sat, wrapped up in shawls and cloaks, outside the hall door—uncles, cousins, aunts, little boys and big boys, little girls and big girls, with, as the theatre posters say, villagers and retainers, some forty of them in all, and waited. But the fireworks did not go off. I cannot explain why they did not go off. Nobody ever could explain. The laws of nature seemed to be suspended for that night only. The rockets lay down and died where they stood. No human agency seemed able to ignite the squibs. The crackers gave one bang and collapsed. The Roman candles might as well have been English rushlights. The Catherine wheels became mere revolving glow-worms. The golden rain mistook itself for a huge squib, and acted accordingly. The set-piece—a ship at sea—showed one mast and the captain, and then went out; just one or two did their duty, but they only

served to render the foolishness of the others more striking. The little girls giggled, the little boys chaffed, the aunts and cousins said it was beautiful, the uncles enquired if it was all over, and talked about supper and trains, the "villagers and retainers" dispersed laughing, the indulgent mother said "never mind," and explained how well they had gone off yesterday; the clever little boy crept upstairs to his little room, and blubbed his little heart out in the dark.

* * * *

And draws therefrom a moral.

Hours later, when the crowd had forgotten him, he stole out again into the garden. He sat down amid the ruins of his hope, and wondered what could have caused the fiasco. Still puzzled, he drew from his pocket a box of matches, and, lighting one, held it to the seared end of one of the rockets he had tried in vain to light four hours ago. It smouldered for an instant, then shot with a swish into the air and broke into a hundred points of fire. He tried another and another with the same result. He made a fresh attempt to fire the set piece. Point by point the whole picture —minus the captain and one mast—came out of the night, and stood revealed in all the majesty of flame. Its sparks fell upon the piled-up heap of candles, wheels, and rockets that a little while before had obstinately refused to burn, and that, one after another, had been thrown aside as useless. Now, with the night frost upon them, they leaped to light in one grand volcanic eruption. And in front of the gorgeous spectacle he stood, with only one consolation—his mother's hand in his. The whole thing was a mystery to him at the time, but, as he learned to know life better, he came to understand that it was only one example of a great and inexplicable fact ruling human affairs: *Your fireworks won't go off while the crowd is around.* Our brilliant speeches don't occur to us till the door has closed upon us, and we are alone in the street, or, as the French would say, until we are coming down the stairs. Our after-dinner oratory, that sounded so telling as we delivered it before the looking-glass, falls strangely flat amid the clinking of the glasses. The passionate torrent of words we meant to pour into her ear becomes a feeble, halting rigmarole, at which—small blame to her—she only laughs. What magnificent hits we made when practising! What poor cricket we play when the match begins! What magnificent breaks we make at billiards when we have the table to ourselves! I remember reading a story once of an aloe that lived in a greenhouse. Year by year, as the other flowers unfolded their lovely petals, they sneered at the poor little dull green aloe; but the aloe, knowing that her time would come, bore their contempt in silence, until at length one year her blossom of a hundred summers shone forth, overshadowing all the other blossoms. Then in her hour of triumph she called to the flowers that had sneered at her to turn their heads and look at her. But they heard her not, for they were dead.

JEROME K. JEROME.

My First Book.

"ON THE STAGE AND OFF."

By Jerome K. Jerome.

Illustrations by A. S. Boyd and Geo. Hutchinson.

(Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle and Young.)

THE story of one's "First Book" I take to be the last chapter of one's literary romance. The long wooing is over. The ardent young author has at last won his coy public. The good publisher has joined their hands. The merry critics, invited to the feast of reason, have blessed the union, and thrown the rice and slippers—occasionally other things. The bridegroom sits alone with his bride, none between them, and ponders.

The fierce struggle, with its wild hopes and fears, its heart-leapings and heart-achings, its rose-pink dawns of endless promise, its grey twilights of despair, its passion and its pain, lies behind. Before him stretches the long, level road of daily doing. Will he please her to all time? Will she always be sweet and gracious to him? Will she never tire of him? The echo of the wedding-bells floats faintly through the darkening room. The fair forms of half-forgotten dreams rise up around him. He jumps to his feet with a slight shiver, and rings for the lamps to be lighted.

Ah! that "First Book" we meant to write. How it pressed forward, an oriflamme of joy, through all ranks and peoples; how the world rang with the wonder of it. How men and women laughed and cried over it. From every page there sprang to light a new idea. Its every paragraph scintillated with fresh wit, deep thought, and new humour. And, ye gods! how the critics praised it. How they rejoiced over the discovery of the new genius. How ably they pointed out to the reading public its manifold merits, its marvellous charm. Aye, it was a great work that book we wrote as we strode laughing through the silent streets, beneath the little stars.

And, heigho! what a poor little thing it was, the book that we did write. I draw him from his shelf (he is of a faint pink colour, as though blushing all over for his sins), and stand him up before me on the desk. "Jerome K. Jerome"—the K very big, followed by a small J, so that in many quarters the author is spoken of as "Jerome Kjerome," a name that in certain

smoke-laden circles still clings to me—"On the Stage—and Off: The Brief Career of a would-be Actor. One Shilling."

I suppose I ought to be ashamed of him, but how can I be? Is he not my first-born? Did he not come to me in the days of weariness, making my heart glad and proud? Do I not love him the more for his shortcomings?

Somehow, as I stare at him in this dim candlelight, he seems to take odd shape. Slowly he grows into a little pink imp, sitting cross-legged among the litter of my books and papers, squinting at me (I think the squint is caused by the big "K"), and I find myself chatting with him.

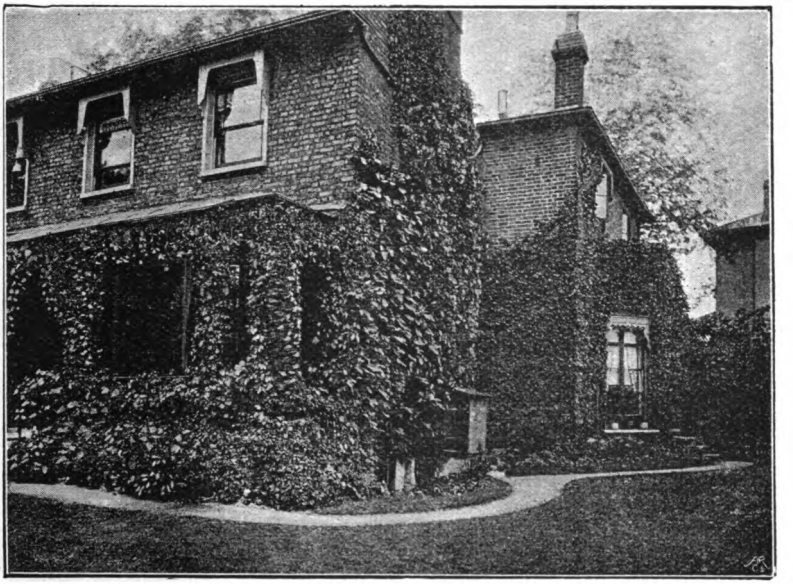
It is an interesting conversation to me, for it is entirely about myself, and I do nearly all the talking, he merely throwing in an occasional necessary reply, or recalling to my memory a forgotten name or face.

"MY FIRST-BORN."

We chat of the little room in Whitfield Street, off the Tottenham Court Road, where he was born; of our depressing, meek-eyed old landlady, and of how, one day, during the course of chance talk, it came out that she, in the far back days of her youth, had been an actress, winning stage love and breaking stage hearts with the best of them; of how the faded face would light up as, standing with the tea-tray in her hands, she would tell us of her triumphs, and repeat to us her "Press Notices," which she had learned by heart; and of how from her we heard not a few facts and stories useful to us. We talk of the footsteps that of evenings would climb the creaking stairs and enter at our door; of George, who always believed in us (God bless him), though he could never explain why; of practical Charley, who thought we should do better if we left literature alone and stuck to work. Ah, well, he meant kindly, and there be many who would that he had prevailed. We remember the difficulties we had to contend with; the couple in the room below, who would come in and go to bed at twelve, and lie there, quarrelling loudly, until sleep overcame them about two, driving our tender and philosophical sentences entirely out of our head; of the

asthmatical old law-writer, whose never-ceasing cough troubled us greatly (maybe, it troubled him also, but I fear we did not consider that); of the rickety table that wobbled as we wrote, and that, whenever in a forgetful moment we leant upon it, gently but firmly collapsed.

"Yes," I say to the little pink imp; "as a study the room had its drawbacks, but we lived some grand hours there, didn't we? We laughed and sang there, and the songs we chose breathed ever of hope and victory, and so loudly we sang them we



MR. JEROME'S HOUSE AT ST. JOHN'S WOOD.

might have been modern Joshuas, thinking to capture a city with our breath.

"And then that wonderful view we used to see from its dingy window panes—that golden country that lay stretched before us, beyond the thousand chimney-pots, above the drifting smoke, above the creeping fog—do you remember that?"

It was worth living in that cramped room, worth sleeping on that knobbly bed, to gain an occasional glimpse of that shining land, with its marble palaces, where one day we should enter, an honoured guest; its wide market-places, where the people thronged to listen to our words. I have climbed many stairs, peered through many windows in this London town since then, but never

have I seen that view again. Yet, from somewhere in our midst, it must be visible, for friends of mine, as we have sat alone, and the talk has sunk into low tones, broken by long silences, have told me that they, too, have looked upon those same glittering towers and streets. But the odd thing is that none of us has seen them since he was a very young man. So, maybe, it is only that the country is a long way off, and that our eyes have grown dimmer as we have grown older.

"And who was that old fellow that helped us so much?" I ask of my little pink friend; "you remember him surely—a very ancient fellow, the oldest actor on the boards he always boasted himself—had played with Edmund Kean and Macready. I used to put you in my pocket of a night and meet him outside the stage door of the Princess's; and we would adjourn to a little tavern in old Oxford market to talk you over, and he would tell me anecdotes and stories to put in you."

"You mean Johnson," says the pink imp; "J. B. Johnson. He was with you in your first engagement at Astley's, under Murray Wood and Virginia Blackwood. He and you were the High Priests in Mazeppa, if you remember, and had to carry Lisa Weber across the stage, you taking her head and he her heels. Do you recollect what he said to her, on the first night, as you were both staggering towards the couch: 'Well, I've played with Fanny Kemble, Cushman, Glyn, and all of them, but hang me my dear, if you ain't the heaviest lead I've ever supported.'"

"That's the old fellow," I reply; "I owe a good deal to him and so do you. I used to read bits of you to him in a whisper as we stood in the bar; and he always had one formula of praise for you: 'It's damned clever, young 'un; damned clever. I shouldn't have thought it of you.'

"And that reminds me," I continue—I hesitate a little here, for I fear what I am about to say may offend him—"what have you done to yourself since I wrote you? I was looking you over the other day, and really I could scarcely recognise you. You were full of brilliancy and originality when you were in manuscript. What have you done with it all?"

By some mysterious process he contrives to introduce an extra twist into the squint with which he is regarding me, but makes no reply, and I continue:

"Take, for example, that gem I lighted upon one drizzly night in Portland Place. I remember the circumstance distinctly. I had been walking the deserted streets, working at you; my note-

book in one hand and a pencil in the other. I was coming home through Portland Place, when suddenly, just beyond the third lamp-post from the Crescent, there flashed into my brain a thought so original, so deep, so true, that involuntarily I exclaimed: 'My God, what a grand idea!' and a coffee-stall keeper, passing with his barrow just at that moment, sang out: 'Tell it us, guv'nor. There ain't many knocking about.'

"I took no notice of the man, but hurried on to the next lamp-post to jot down that brilliant idea before I should forget it; and the moment I reached home I pulled you out of your drawer and copied it out on to your pages, and sat long staring at it, wondering what the world would say when it came to read it. Altogether I must have put into you nearly a dozen startlingly original thoughts. What have you done with them? They are certainly not there now."

"'I HAD TO CARRY LISA WEBER ACROSS THE STAGE.'"

Still he keeps silence, and I wax indignant at the evident amusement with which he regards my accusation.

"And the bright wit, the rollicking humour with which I made your pages sparkle, where are they?" I ask him, reproachfully; "those epigrammatic flashes that, when struck, illumined the little room with a blaze of sudden light, showing each cobweb in its dusty corner, and dying out, leaving my dazzled eyes groping for the lamp; those grand jokes at which I myself, as I made them, laughed till the rickety iron bedstead beneath me shook in

sympathy with harsh metallic laughter; where are they, my friend? I have read you through, page by page, and the thoughts in you are thoughts that the world has grown tired of thinking; at your wit one smiles, thinking that anyone could think it wit; and your humour your severest critic could hardly accuse of being very new. What has happened to you? What wicked fairy has bewitched you? I poured gold into your lap, and you yield me back only crumpled leaves."

"JOTTED DOWN THAT BRILLIANT IDEA."

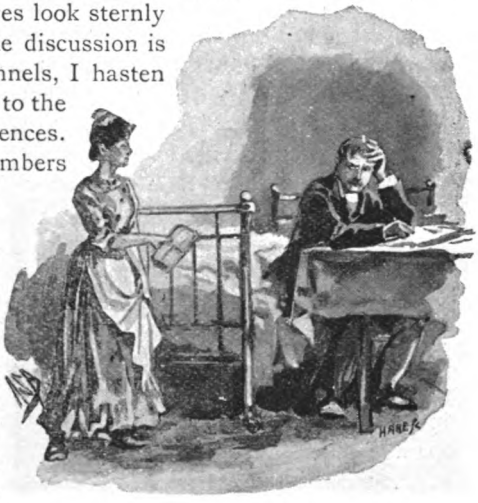
With a jerk of his quaint legs he assumes a more upright posture.

"My dear Parent," he begins in a tone that at once reverses our positions, so that he becomes the monitor and I the wriggling admonished; "don't, I pray you, turn prig in your old age; don't sink into the 'superior person' who mistakes carping for criticism, and jeering for judgment. Any fool can see faults, they lie on the surface. The merit of a thing is hidden within it, and is visible only to insight. And there is merit in me, in spite of your cheap sneers, sir. Maybe I do not contain an original idea. Show me the book published since the days of Caxton that does! Are our young men, like the youth of China, to be forbidden to think, because Confucius thought, years ago? The wit you appreciate now needs to be more pungent than the wit that satisfied you at twenty; are you sure it is as wholesome? You cannot smile at humour you would once have laughed at; is it you or the humour that has grown old and stale? I am the work of a very young man, who, writing of that which he knew and had felt, put down all things truthfully as they appeared to him, in such way as seemed most natural to him, having no thought of popular taste, standing in no fear of what critics might say. Be sure that all your future books are as free from unworthy aims.

"Besides," he adds, after a short pause, during which I have started to reply, but have turned back to think again, "is not

this talk idle between you and me? This apologetic attitude, is it not the cant of the literary profession? At the bottom of your heart you are proud of me, as every author is of every book he has written. Some of them he thinks better than others; but, as the Irishman said of whiskies, they are all good. He sees their shortcomings. He dreams he could have done better; but he is positive no one else could."

His little twinkling eyes look sternly at me, and, feeling that the discussion is drifting into awkward channels, I hasten to divert it, and we return to the chat about our early experiences.



"I HATED THE DISMAL LITTLE 'SLAVEY.'"

I ask him if he remembers those dreary days when, written neatly in round hand on sermon paper, he journeyed a ceaseless round from newspaper to newspaper, from magazine to magazine, returning always soiled and limp to Whitfield Street, still further darkening the ill-lit room as he entered. Some would keep him for a month, making me indignant at the waste of precious time. Others would send him back by the next post, insulting me by their indecent haste. Many, in returning him, would thank me for having given them the privilege and pleasure of reading him, and I would curse them for hypocrites. Others would reject him with no pretence at regret whatever, and I would marvel at their rudeness.

I hated the dismal little "slavey," who, twice a week, on an average, would bring him up to me. If she smiled as she handed me the packet, I fancied she was jeering at me. If she looked sad, as she more often did, poor little overworked slut, I thought she was pitying me. I shunned the postman if I saw him in the street, sure that he guessed my shame.

"Did anyone ever read you out of all those I sent you to?" I ask him.

"Do editors read manuscript by unknown authors?" he asks me, in return.

"I fear not more than they can help," I confess; "they would have little else to do."

"Oh," he remarks demurely, "I thought I had read that they did."

"Very likely," I reply; "I have also read that theatrical managers read all the plays sent to them, eager to discover new talent. One obtains much curious information by reading."

"But somebody did read me eventually," he reminds me; "and liked me. Give credit where credit is due."

"Ah, yes," I admit; "my good friend Aylmer Gowing—the 'Walter Gordon' of the old Haymarket in Buckstone's time, 'Gentleman Gordon' as Charles Matthews nicknamed him—kindliest and most genial of men. Shall I ever forget the brief note that came to me four days after I had posted you to 'The Editor—*Play*':—'Dear Sir, I like your articles very much. Can you call on me to-morrow morning before twelve?—Yours truly, W. AYLMER GOWING.'"

So success had come at last—not the glorious goddess I had pictured, but a quiet, pleasant-faced lady. I had imagined the editor of *Cornhill*, or the *Nineteenth Century*, or *The Illustrated London News* writing me that my manuscript was the most brilliant, witty, and powerful story he had ever read, and enclosing me a cheque for two hundred guineas. *The Play* was an almost unknown little penny weekly, "run" by Mr. Gowing—who, though retired, could not bear to be altogether unconnected with his beloved stage—at a no inconsiderable yearly loss. It could give me little fame and less wealth. But a crust is a feast to a man who has grown weary of dreaming dinners, and as I sat with that letter in my hand a mist rose before my eyes, and I —acted in a way that would read foolish if written down.

The next morning, at eleven, I stood beneath the porch of 37, Victoria Road, Kensington, wishing I did not feel so hot and nervous, and that I had not pulled the bell-rope quite so vigorously. But when Mr. Gowing, in smoking-coat and slippers, came forward and shook me by the hand, my shyness left me. In his study, lined with theatrical books, we sat and talked. Mr. Gowing's voice seemed the sweetest I had ever listened to, for, with unprofessional frankness, it sang the praises of my work. He, in his young acting days, had been through the provincial mill, and found my pictures true, and many of my pages seemed to him, so he said, "as good as *Punch*." (He meant it complimentarily.) He explained to me the position of his paper, and I agreed (only too gladly) to give him the

use of the book for nothing. As I was leaving, however, he called me back and slipped a five-pound note into my hand—a different price to what friend A. P. Watt charms out of proprietors' pockets for me nowadays, yet never since have I felt as rich as on that foggy November morning when I walked across Kensington Gardens with that "bit of flimsy" held tight in my left hand. I could not bear the idea of spending it on mere mundane things. Now and then, during the long days of apprenticeship, I drew it from its hiding-place and looked at it, sorely tempted. But it always went back, and later, when

THE STUDY.

the luck began to turn, I purchased with it, at a second-hand shop in Goodge Street, an old Dutch bureau that I had long had my eye upon. It is an inconvenient piece of furniture. One cannot stretch one's legs as one sits writing at it, and if one rises suddenly it knocks bad language into one's knees and out of one's mouth. But one must pay for sentiment, as for other things.

In *The Play* the papers gained a fair amount of notice, and won for me some kindly words; notably, I remember, from John Clayton and Palgrave Simpson. I thought that in the glory of print they would readily find a publisher, but I was mistaken.

The same weary work lay before me, only now I had more heart in me, and, having wrestled once with Fate and prevailed, stood less in fear of her.

Sometimes with a letter of introduction, sometimes without, sometimes with a bold face, sometimes with a timid step, I visited nearly every publisher in London. A few received me kindly, others curtly, many not at all. From most of them I gathered that the making of books was a pernicious and unprofitable occupation. Some thought the work would prove highly successful if I paid the expenses of publication, but were less impressed with its merits on my explaining to them my financial position. All kept me waiting long before seeing me, but made haste to say "Good day" to me.

I suppose all young authors have had to go through the same course. I sat one evening, a few months ago, with a literary friend of mine. The talk turned upon early struggles, and, with a laugh, he said: "Do you know one of the foolish things I love to do? I like to go with a paper parcel under my arm into some big publishing house, and to ask, in a low, nervous voice, if Mr. So-and-so is disengaged. The clerk, with a contemptuous glance towards me, says that he is not sure, and asks if I have an appointment. 'No,' I reply; 'not—not exactly, but I think he will see me. It's a matter of importance. I shall not detain him a minute.'

"The clerk goes on with his writing, and I stand waiting. At the end of about five minutes, he, without looking up, says curtly, 'What name?' and I hand him my card.

"Up to that point, I have imagined myself a young man again, but there the fancy is dispelled. The man glances at the card, and then takes a sharp look at me. 'I beg your pardon, sir,' he says, 'will you take a seat in here for a moment.' In a few seconds he flies back again with, 'Will you kindly step this way, sir.' As I follow him upstairs I catch a glimpse of somebody being hurriedly bustled out of the private office, and the great man himself comes to the door, smiling, and as I take his outstretched hand I am remembering other times that he has forgotten."

In the end—to make a long story short, as the saying is—Mr. Tuer, of "Ye Leadenhall Press," urged thereto by a mutual friend, read the book, and, I presume, found merit in it, for he offered to publish it if I would make him a free gift of the copyright. I thought the terms hard at the time (though in my eagerness to see my name upon the cover of a real book I quickly

agreed to them), but, with experience, I am inclined to admit that the bargain was a fair one. The English are not a book-buying people. Out of every hundred publications hardly more than one obtains a sale of over a thousand, and, in the case of an unknown writer, with no personal friends upon the Press, it is surprising how few copies sometimes *can* be sold.

I am happy to think that in this instance, however, nobody suffered. The book was, as the phrase goes, well received by the public, who were possibly attracted to it by its subject, a perennially popular one. Some of the papers praised it, others dismissed it as utter rubbish; and then, fifteen months later, on reviewing my next book, regretted that a young man who had written such a capital first book should have followed it up by so wretched a second.

"I AM REMEMBERING!"

One writer—the greatest enemy I have ever had, though I exonerate him of all but thoughtlessness—wrote me down a "humourist," which term of reproach (as it is considered to be in Merrie England) has clung to me ever since, so that now, if I pen a pathetic story, the Reviewer calls it "depressing humour," and if I tell a tragic story, he says it is "false humour," and, quoting

the dying speech of the broken-hearted heroine, indignantly demands to know "where he is supposed to laugh?" I am firmly persuaded that if I committed a murder half the Book Reviewers would allude to it as a melancholy example of the extreme lengths to which the "new humour" had descended.

"Once a humourist, always a humourist," is the Reviewer's motto.

"And all things allowed for—the unenthusiastic publisher, the insufficiently appreciative public, the wicked critic," says my little pink friend, breaking his somewhat long silence, "what do you think of literature as a profession?"

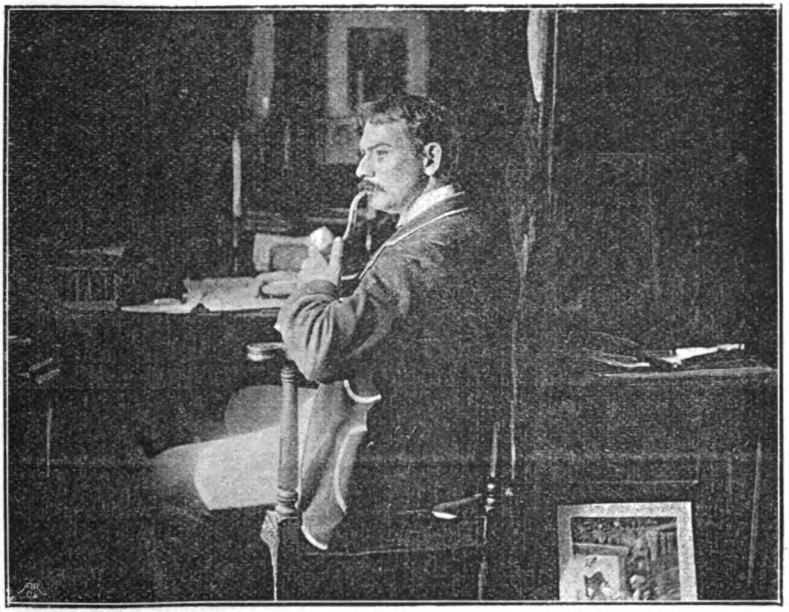
I take some time to reply, for I wish to get down to what I really think, not stopping, as one generally does, at what one thinks one ought to think.

"I think," I begin, at length, "that it depends upon the literary man. If a man think to use literature merely as a means to fame and fortune, then he will find it an extremely unsatisfactory profession, and he would have done better to take up politics or company promoting. If he trouble himself about his status and position therein, loving the uppermost tables at feasts, and the chief seats in public places, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Master, Master, then he will find it a profession fuller than most professions of petty jealousy, of little spite, of foolish hating and foolish log-rolling, of feminine narrowness and childish querulousness. If he think too much of his prices per thousand words he will find it a degrading profession; as the solicitor, thinking only of his bills-of-cost, will find the law degrading; as the doctor, working only for two-guinea fees, will find medicine degrading; as the priest, with his eyes ever fixed on the Bishop's mitre, will find Christianity degrading.

"But if he love his work for the work's sake, if he remain child enough to be fascinated with his own fancies, to laugh at his own jests, to grieve at his own pathos, to weep at his own tragedy—then, as smoking his pipe, he watches the shadows of his brain coming and going before his half-closed eyes, listens to their voices in the air about him, he will thank God for making him a literary man. To such a one, it seems to me, literature must prove ennobling. Of all professions it is the one compelling a man to use whatever brain he has to its fullest and widest. With one or two other callings, it invites him—nay, compels him—to turn from the clamour of the passing day to speak for a while with the voices that are eternal.

"To me it seems that if anything outside oneself can help one, the service of literature must strengthen and purify a man. Thinking of his heroine's failings, of his villain's virtues, may he not grow more tolerant of all things, kinder thinking towards man and woman? From the sorrow that he dreams, may he not learn sympathy with the sorrow that he sees? May not his own brave puppets teach him how a man should live and die?

"To the literary man, all life is a book. The sparrow on the telegraph wire chirps cheeky nonsense to him as he passes by. The urchin's face beneath the gas lamp tells him a story,



MR. JEROME K JEROME.

sometimes merry, sometimes sad. Fog and sunshine have their voices for him.

"Nor can I see, even from the most worldly and business-like point of view, that the modern man of letters has cause of complaint. The old Grub Street days when he starved or begged are gone. Thanks to the men who have braved sneers and misrepresentation in unthanked championship of his plain rights, he is now in a position of dignified independence; and if he cannot attain to the twenty thousand a year prizes of

the fashionable Q.C. or M.D., he does not have to wait their time for his success, while what he can and does earn is amply sufficient for all that a man of sense need desire. His calling is a password into all ranks. In all circles he is honoured. He enjoys the luxury of a power and influence that many a prime minister might envy.

"There is still a last prize in the gift of literature that needs no sentimentalist to appreciate. In a drawer of my desk lies a pile of letters, of which if I were not very proud I should be something more or less than human. They have come to me from the uttermost parts of the earth, from the streets near at hand. Some are penned in the stiff phraseology taught when old fashions were new, some in the free and easy colloquialism of the rising generation. Some, written on sick beds, are scrawled in pencil. Some, written by hands unfamiliar with the English language, are weirdly constructed. Some are crested, some are smeared. Some are learned, some are ill-spelled. In different ways they tell me that, here and there, I have brought to someone a smile or pleasant thought; that to some one in pain and in sorrow I have given a moment's laugh."

Pinky yawns (or a shadow thrown by the guttering candle makes it seem so). "Well," he says, "are we finished? Have we talked about ourselves, glorified our profession, and annihilated our enemies to our entire satisfaction? Because, if so, you might put me back. I'm feeling sleepy."

I reach out my hand, and take him up by his wide, flat waist. As I draw him towards me, his little legs vanish into his squat body, the twinkling eye becomes dull and lifeless. The dawn steals in upon him, for I have sat working long into the night, and I see that he is only a little shilling book bound in pink paper. Wondering whether our talk together has been as good as at the time I thought it, or whether he has led me into making a fool of myself, I replace him in his corner.

The King of Schnorrers.

By I. Zangwill.

Illustrations by G. Hutchinson.

V.

Showing how the King Dissolved the Mahamad.

MANASSEH DA COSTA (thus docked of his nominal plenitude in the solemn writ) had been summoned before the Mahamad, the intended union of his daughter with a Polish Jew having excited the liveliest horror and displeasure in the breasts of the Elders of the Synagogue. Such a Jew did not pronounce Hebrew as they did!

The Mahamad was a Council of Five, no less dread than the more notorious Council of Ten. Like the Venetian Tribunal, which has unjustly monopolised the attention of history, it was of annual election, and it was elected by a larger body of Elders, just as the Council of Ten was chosen by the aristocracy. "The gentlemen of the Mahamad," as they were styled, administered the affairs of the Spanish-Portuguese community, and their oligarchy would undoubtedly be a byword for all that is arbitrary and inquisitorial but for the widespread ignorance of its existence. To itself the Mahamad was the centre of creation. It refused to bow even to the authority of the Lord Mayor of London. A Sephardic Jew lived and moved and had his being "by permission of the Mahamad." Without its consent he could have no legitimate place in the scheme of things. Minus "the permission of the Mahamad" he could not marry; with it he could be divorced readily. He might, indeed, die without the sanction of the Council of Five, but this was the only great act of his life which was free from its surveillance, and he could certainly not be buried save "by permission of the Mahamad." The Haham himself, the Sage or Chief Rabbi of the congregation, could not unite his flock in holy wedlock without the "permission of the Mahamad." And this authority was not merely negative and passive, it was likewise positive and active. To be a Yahid—a recognised congregant—one had to submit one's neck to a yoke more galling even than that of the Torah, to say nothing of the payment of Finta, or poll-tax. Woe to him who refused to be Warden of the Captives—he who

ransomed the chained hostages of the Moorish Corsairs, or the war prisoners held in durance by the Turks—or to be President of the Congregation, or Parnass of the Holy Land, or Bridegroom of the Law, or any of the numerous dignitaries of a complex constitution. Fines, frequent and heavy—for the benefit of the poor-box—awaited him "by permission of the Mahamad." Unhappy the wight who misconducted himself in Synagogue "by offending the president, or grossly insulting any other person," as the ordinance deliciously ran. Penalties, stringent and harrying, visited these and other offences—deprivation of "good deeds," such as swathing the Holy Scroll, or opening the Ark, ignominious relegation to seats behind the reading-desk, withdrawal of the franchise, prohibition against shaving for a term of weeks! And if, accepting office, the Yahid failed in the punctual and regular discharge of his duties, he was mulcted and chastised none the less. A fine of forty pounds drove from the Synagogue Isaac Disraeli, collector of *Curiosities of Literature*, and made possible that curiosity of politics, the career of Lord Beaconsfield. The fathers of the Synagogue, who drew up their constitution in pure Castilian in the days when Pepys noted the indecorum in their little Synagogue in King Street, meant their statutes to cement, not thus to disintegrate, the community. 'Twas a tactless tyranny, this of the Mahamad, an inelastic administration of a cast-iron codex wrought "in good King Charles's golden days," when the colony of Dutch-Spanish exiles was as a camp in enemies' country, in need of military *régime;* and it co-operated with the attractions of an unhampered "Christian" career in driving many a brilliant family beyond the gates of the Ghetto, and into the pages of Debrett. Athens is always a dangerous rival to Sparta.

"THE ELDERS OF THE SYNAGOGUE."

But the Mahamad itself moved strictly in the grooves of prescription. That legalistic instinct of the Hebrew, which had

evolved the most gigantic and minute code of conduct in the world, had beguiled these latter-day Jews into superadding to it a local legislation that grew into a hundred pages of Portuguese—an intertangled network of *Ascamot* or regulations, providing for every contingency of Synagogue politics, from the quarrels of members for the best seats down to the dimensions of their graves in the *Carreira*, from the distribution of "good deeds" among the rich to the distribution of Passover Cakes among the poor. If the wheels and pulleys of the communal life moved "by permission of the Mahamad," the Mahamad moved by permission of the *Ascamot*.

The Solemn Council was met—"in complete Mahamad." Even the Chief of the Elders was present, by virtue of his privilege, making a sixth; not to count the Chancellor or Secretary, who sat flutteringly fingering the Portuguese Minute Book on the right of the President. He was a little man, an odd medley of pomp and bluster, with a snuff-smeared upper lip, and a nose that had dipped in the wine when it was red. He had a grandiose sense of his own importance, but it was a pride that had its roots in humility, for he felt himself great because he was the servant of greatness. He lived "by permission of the Mahamad." As an official he was theoretically inaccessible. If you approached him on a matter he would put out his palms deprecatingly and pant, "I must consult the Mahamad." It was said of him that he had once been asked the time, and that he had automatically panted, "I must consult the Mahamad." This consultation was the merest form; in practice the Secretary had more influence than the Chief Rabbi, who was not allowed to recommend an applicant for charity, for the quaint reason that the respect entertained for him might unduly prejudice the Council in favour of his candidate. As no gentleman of the Mahamad could possibly master the statutes in his year of office, especially as only a rare member understood the Portuguese in which they had been ultimately couched, the Secretary was invariably referred to, for he was permanent, full of saws and precedents, and so he interpreted the law with impartial inaccuracy—"by permission of the Mahamad." In his heart of hearts he believed that the sun rose and the rain fell—"by permission of the Mahamad." The Council Chamber was of goodly proportions, and was decorated by gold lettered panels, inscribed with the names of pious donors, thick as saints in a graveyard, overflowing even into the lobby. The flower and chivalry of the Spanish Jewry had sat round that Council-table,

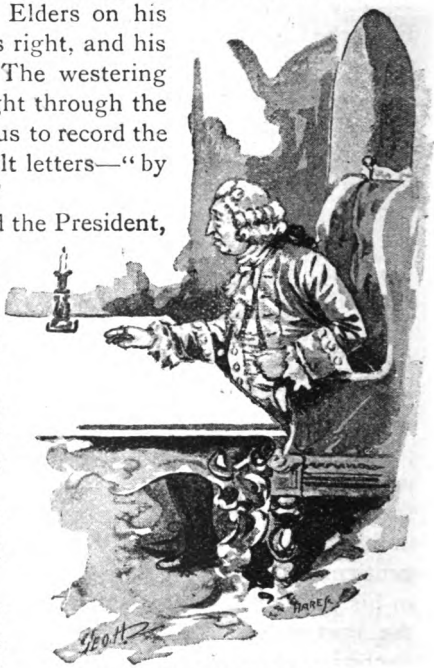
grandees who had plumed and ruffled it with the bloods of their day, clanking their swords with the best, punctilious withal and ceremonious, with the stately Castilian courtesy still preserved by the men who were met this afternoon, to whom their memory was as faint as the fading records of the panels. These descendants of theirs had still elaborate salutations and circumlocutions, and austere dignities of debate. "God-fearing men of capacity and respectability," as the *Ascama* demanded, they were also men of money, and it gave them a port and a repose. His Britannic Majesty graced the throne no better than the President of the Mahamad, seated at the head of the long table in his alcoved arm-chair, with the Chief of the Elders on his left, and the Chancellor on his right, and his Councillors all about him. The westering sun sent a pencil of golden light through the Norman windows as if anxious to record the names of those present in gilt letters—"by permission of the Mahamad."

"Let da Costa enter," said the President, when the agenda demanded the great *Schnorrer's* presence.

The Chancellor fluttered to his feet, fussily threw open the door, and beckoned vacancy with his finger till he discovered Manasseh was not in the lobby. The beadle came hurrying up instead.

"Where is da Costa?" panted the Chancellor. "Call da Costa."

"Da Costa!" sonorously intoned the beadle with the long-drawn accent of court ushers.



THE PRESIDENT OF THE MAHAMAD.

The corridor rang hollow, empty of Manasseh. "Why he was here a moment ago," cried the bewildered beadle. He ran down the passage, and found him sure enough at the end of it where it abutted on the street. The King of *Schnorrers* was in dignified converse with a person of consideration.

"Da Costa!" the beadle cried again, but his tone was less awesome and more tetchy. The beggar did not turn his head.

"Mr. da Costa," said the beadle, now arrived too near the imposing figure to venture on familiarities with it. This time the beggar gave indications of restored hearing. "Yes, my man," he said, turning and advancing a few paces to meet the envoy. "Don't go, Grobstock," he called over his shoulder.

"Didn't you hear me calling?" grumbled the beadle.

"I heard you calling da Costa, but I naturally imagined it was one of your drinking companions," replied Manasseh severely.

"The Mahamad is waiting for you," faltered the beadle.

"Tell *the gentlemen* of the Mahamad," said Manasseh, with reproving emphasis, "that I shall do myself the pleasure of being with them presently. Nay, pray don't hurry away, my dear Grobstock," he went on, resuming his place at the German magnate's side—"and so your wife is taking the waters at Tunbridge Wells. In faith, 'tis an excellent regimen for the vapours. I am thinking of sending my wife to Buxton—the warden of our hospital has his country-seat there."

"But you are wanted," murmured Grobstock, who was anxious to escape. He had caught the *Schnorrer's* eye as its owner sunned himself in the archway, and it held him.

"'Tis only a meeting of the Mahamad I have to attend," he said indifferently. "Rather a nuisance—but duty is duty."

Grobstock's red face became a setting for two expanded eyes.

"I thought the Mahamad was your chief Council," he exclaimed.

"Yes, there are only five of us," said Manasseh lightly, and, while Grobstock gaped incredulous, the Chancellor himself shambled up in pale consternation.

"You are keeping the gentlemen of the Mahamad waiting," he panted imperiously.

"Ah, you are right, Grobstock," said Manasseh with a sigh of resignation. "They cannot get on without me. Well, you will excuse me, I know. I am glad to have seen you again—we shall finish our chat at your house some evening, shall we? I have agreeable recollections of your hospitality."

"My wife will be away all this month," Grobstock repeated feebly.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Manasseh roguishly. "Thank you for the reminder. I shall not fail to aid you in taking advantage of her absence. Perhaps mine will be away, too—at Buxton. Two bachelors, ha! ha! ha!" and, proffering his hand,

he shook Grobstock's in gracious farewell. Then he sauntered leisurely in the wake of the feverishly impatient Chancellor, his staff tapping the stones in measured tardiness.

"Good afternoon, gentlemen," he observed affably as he entered the Council Chamber.

"You have kept us waiting," sharply rejoined the President of the Mahamad, ruffled out of his regal suavity. He was a puffy, swarthy personage, elegantly attired, and he leaned forward on his velvet throne, tattooing on the table with bediamonded fingers.

"Not so long as you have kept *me* waiting," said Manasseh with quiet resentment. "If I had known you expected me to cool my heels in the corridor I should not have come, and, had not my friend the Treasurer of the Great Synagogue opportunely turned up to chat with me, I should not have stayed."

"You are impertinent, sir," growled the President.

"I think, sir, it is you who owe me an apology," maintained Manasseh unflinchingly, "and, knowing the courtesy and high breeding which has always distinguished your noble family, I can only explain your present tone by your being unaware I have a grievance. No doubt it is your Chancellor who cited me to appear at too early an hour."

The President, cooled by the quiet dignity of the beggar, turned a questioning glance upon the outraged Chancellor, who was crimson and quivering with confusion and indignation.

"It is usual t-t-to summon persons before the c-c-commencement of the meeting," he stammered hotly. "We cannot tell how long the prior business will take."

"Then I would respectfully submit to the Chief of the Elders," said Manasseh, "that at the next meeting of his august body he move a resolution that persons cited to appear before the Mahamad shall take precedence of all other business."

The Chief of the Elders looked helplessly at the President of the Mahamad, who was equally at sea. "However, I will not press that point now," added Manasseh, "nor will I draw the attention of the committee to the careless, perfunctory manner in which the document summoning me was drawn up, so that, had I been a stickler for accuracy, I need not have answered to the name of Manasseh da Costa."

"But that *is* your name," protested the Chancellor.

"If you will examine the Charity List," said Manasseh magnificently, "you will see that my name is Manasseh Bueno Barzillai Azevedo da Costa. But you are keeping the gentlemen

of the Mahamad waiting." And with a magnanimous air of dismissing the past, he seated himself on the nearest empty chair at the foot of the table, leaned his elbows on the table, and his face on his hands, and gazed across at the President immediately opposite. The Councillors were so taken aback by his unexpected bearing that this additional audacity was scarcely noted. But the Chancellor, wounded in his inmost instincts, exclaimed irately, "Stand up, sir. These chairs are for the gentlemen of the Mahamad."

"And being gentlemen," added Manasseh crushingly, "they know better than to keep an old man on his legs any longer."

"BECKONED WITH HIS FINGER."

"If you were a gentleman," retorted the Chancellor, "you would take that thing off your head."

"If you were not a Man-of-the-Earth," rejoined the beggar, "you would know that it is not a mark of disrespect for the Mahamad, but of respect for the Law, which is higher than the Mahamad. The rich man can afford to neglect our holy religion, but the poor man has only the Law. It is his sole luxury."

The pathetic tremor in his voice stirred a confused sense of wrong-doing and injustice in the Councillors' breasts. The President felt vaguely that the edge of his coming impressive rebuke had been turned, if, indeed, he did not sit rebuked instead. Irritated, he turned on the Chancellor, and bade him hold his peace.

"He means well," said Manasseh deprecatingly. "He cannot be expected to have the fine instincts of the gentlemen of the Mahamad. May I ask you, sir," he concluded, "to proceed with the business for which you have summoned me? I have several appointments to keep with clients."

The President's bediamonded fingers recommenced their ill-tempered tattoo; he was fuming inwardly with a sense of baffled

wrath, of righteous indignation made unrighteous. "Is it true, sir," he burst forth at last in the most terrible accents he could command in the circumstances, "that you meditate giving your daughter in marriage to a Polish Jew?"

"No," replied Manasseh curtly.

"No?" articulated the President, while a murmur of astonishment went round the table at this unexpected collapse of the whole case.

"Why, your daughter admitted it to my wife," said the Councillor on Manasseh's right.

Manasseh turned to him, expostulant, tilting his chair and body towards him. "My daughter is going to marry a Polish Jew," he explained with argumentative forefinger, "but I do not meditate giving her to him."

"Oh, then, you will refuse your consent," said the Councillor, hitching his chair back so as to escape the beggar's progressive propinquity. "By no means," quoth Manasseh in surprised accents, as he drew his chair nearer again, "I have already consented. I do not *meditate* consenting. That word argues an inconclusive attitude."

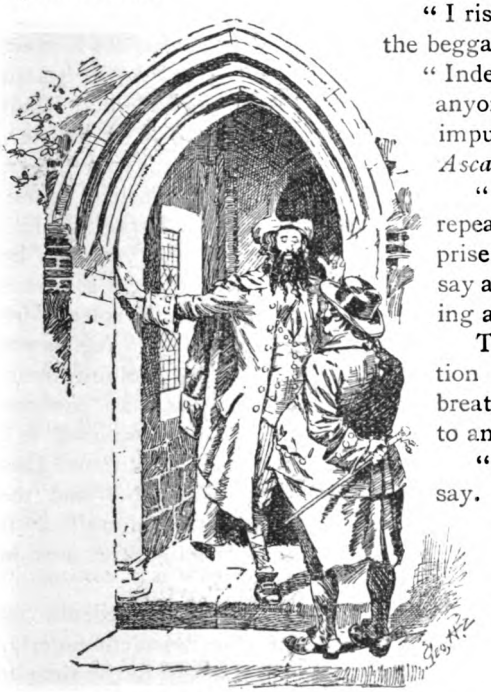
"None of your quibbles, sirrah," cried the President, while a scarlet flush mantled on his dark countenance. "Do you not know that the union you contemplate is disgraceful and degrading to you, to your daughter, and to the community which has done so much for you? What! A Sephardi marry a Tedesco! Shameful."

"And do you think I do not feel the shame as deeply as you?" enquired Manasseh, with infinite pathos. "Do you think, gentlemen, that I have not suffered from this passion of a Tedesco for my daughter? I came here expecting your sympathy, and do you offer me reproach? Perhaps you think, sir"—here he turned again to his right-hand neighbour, who, in his anxiety to evade his pertinacious proximity, had half-wheeled his chair round, offering only his back to the argumentative forefinger—"perhaps you think, because I have consented, that I cannot condole with you, that I am not at one with you in lamenting this blot on our common 'scutcheon; perhaps you think"—here he adroitly twisted his chair into argumentative position on the other side of the Councillor, rounding him like a cape—"that, because you have no sympathy with my tribulation, I have no sympathy with yours. But, if I have consented, it is only because it was the best I could do for my daughter. In my

heart of hearts I have repudiated her, so that she may practically be considered an orphan, and, as such, a fit person to receive the marriage dowry bequeathed by Rodriguez Real, peace be upon him."

"This is no laughing matter, sir," thundered the President, stung into forgetfulness of his dignity by thinking too much of it.

"No, indeed," said Manasseh sympathetically, wheeling to the right so as to confront the President, who went on stormily, "Are you aware, sir, of the penalties you risk by persisting in your course?"



"'HA! HA! HA!' LAUGHED MANASSEH."

"I risk no penalties," replied the beggar.

"Indeed! Then do you think anyone may trample with impunity upon our ancient *Ascamot?*"

"Our ancient *Ascamot!*" repeated Manasseh in surprise. "What have they to say against a Sephardi marrying a Tedesco?"

The audacity of the question rendered the Council breathless. Manasseh had to answer it himself.

"They have nothing to say. There is no such *Ascama.*" There was a moment of awful silence. It was as though he had disavowed the Decalogue.

"Do you question the first principle of our constitution?" said the President at last, in low, ominous tones. "Do you deny that your daughter is a traitress? Do you——?"

"Ask your Chancellor," calmly interrupted Manasseh. "He is a Man-of-the-Earth, but he should know your statutes, and he will tell you that my daughter's conduct is nowhere forbidden."

"Silence, sir," cried the President testily. "Mr. Chancellor, read the *Ascama.*"

The Chancellor wriggled on his chair, his face flushing and paling by turns; all eyes were bent upon him in anxious suspense. He hemmed and ha'd and coughed, and took snuff, and blew his nose elaborately.

"There is n-n-no express *Ascama*," he stuttered at last. Manasseh sat still, in unpretentious triumph.

The Councillor who was now become his right-hand neighbour was the first to break the dazed silence, and it was his first intervention.

"Of course, it was never actually put into writing," he said in stern reproof. "It has never been legislated against, because it has never been conceived possible. These things are an instinct with every right-minded Sephardi. Have we ever legislated against marrying Christians?" Manasseh veered round half a point of the compass, and fixed the new opponent with his argumentative forefinger. "Certainly we have," he replied unexpectedly. "In Section XX., Paragraph II."

"HEM!" COUGHED THE CHANCELLOR."

He quoted the *Ascama* by heart, rolling out the sonorous Portuguese like a solemn indictment. "If our legislators had intended to prohibit intermarriage with the German community, they would have prohibited it."

"There is the Traditional Law as well as the Written," said the Chancellor, recovering himself. "It is so in our holy religion, it is so in our constitution."

"Yes, there are precedents assuredly,' cried the President eagerly.

"There is the case of one of our Treasurers in the time of George II., said the little Chancellor, blossoming under the sunshine of the President s encouragement, and naming the ancestor of a Duchess of to-day. "He wanted to marry a beautiful German Jewess."

"And was interdicted," said the President.

"Hem!" coughed the Chancellor. "He—he was only permitted to marry her under humiliating conditions. The Elders forbade the attendance of the members of the House of Judgment, or of the Cantors; no celebration was to take place in the *Snoga;* no

offerings were to be made for the bridegroom's health, nor was he even to receive the bridegroom's call to the reading of the Law."

"But the Elders will not impose any such conditions on my son-in-law," said Manasseh, skirting round another chair so as to bring his forefinger to play upon the Chief of the Elders, on whose left he had now arrived in his argumentative advances. "In the first place he is not one of us. His desire to join us is a compliment. If anyone has offended your traditions it is my daughter. But then she is not a male, like the Treasurer cited; she is not an active agent, she has not gone out of her way to choose a Tedesco—she has been chosen. Your masculine precedents cannot touch her."

"Ay, but we can touch you," said the contemporary Treasurer, guffawing grimly. He sat opposite Manasseh, and next to the Chancellor.

"Is it fines you are thinking of?" said Manasseh with a scornful glance across the table. "Very well, fine me—if you can afford it. You know that I am a student, a son of the Law, who has no resources but what you allow him. If you care to pay this fine it is your affair. There is always room in the poor-box. I am always glad to hear of fines. You had better make up your mind to the inevitable, gentlemen. Have I not had to do it? There is no *Ascama* to prevent my son-in-law having all the usual privileges—in fact, it was to ask that he might receive the bridegroom's call to the Law on the Sabbath before his marriage that I really came. By Section III., Paragraph I., you are empowered to admit any person about to marry the daughter of a Yahid." Again the sonorous Portuguese rang out, thrilling the Councillors with all that quintessential awfulness of ancient statutes in a tongue not understood. It was not till a quarter of a century later that the *Ascamot* were translated into English, and from that moment their authority was doomed.

The Chancellor was the first to recover from the quotation. Daily contact with these archaic sanctities had dulled his awe, and the President's impotent irritation spurred him to action.

"But you are *not* a Yahid," he said quietly. "By Paragraph V. of the same section, anyone whose name appears on the Charity List ceases to be a Yahid."

"And a vastly proper law," said Manasseh with irony. "Everybody may vote but the *Schnorrer*." And, ignoring the Chancellor's point at great length, he remarked confidentially to the Chief of the Elders, at whose elbow he was still encamped, "It is

curious how few of your Elders perceive that those who take the charity are the pillars of the Synagogue. What keeps your community together? Fines. What ensures respect for your constitution? Fines. What makes every man do his duty? Fines. What rules this very Mahamad? Fines. And it is the poor who provide an outlet for all these moneys. Egad, do you think your members would for a moment tolerate your penalties, if they did not know the money was laid out in 'good deeds'? Charity is the salt of riches, says the Talmud, and, indeed, it is the salt that preserves your community."

"Have done, sir, have done!" shouted the President, losing all regard for those grave amenities of the ancient Council Chamber which Manasseh did his best to maintain. "Do you forget to whom you are talking?"

"I am talking to the Chief of the Elders," said Manasseh in a wounded tone, "but if you would like me to address myself to you—" and wheeling round the Chief of the Elders, he landed his chair next to the President's.

"Silence, fellow!" thundered the President, shrinking spasmodically from his confidential contact. "You have no right to a voice at all; as the Chancellor has reminded us, you are not even a Yahid."

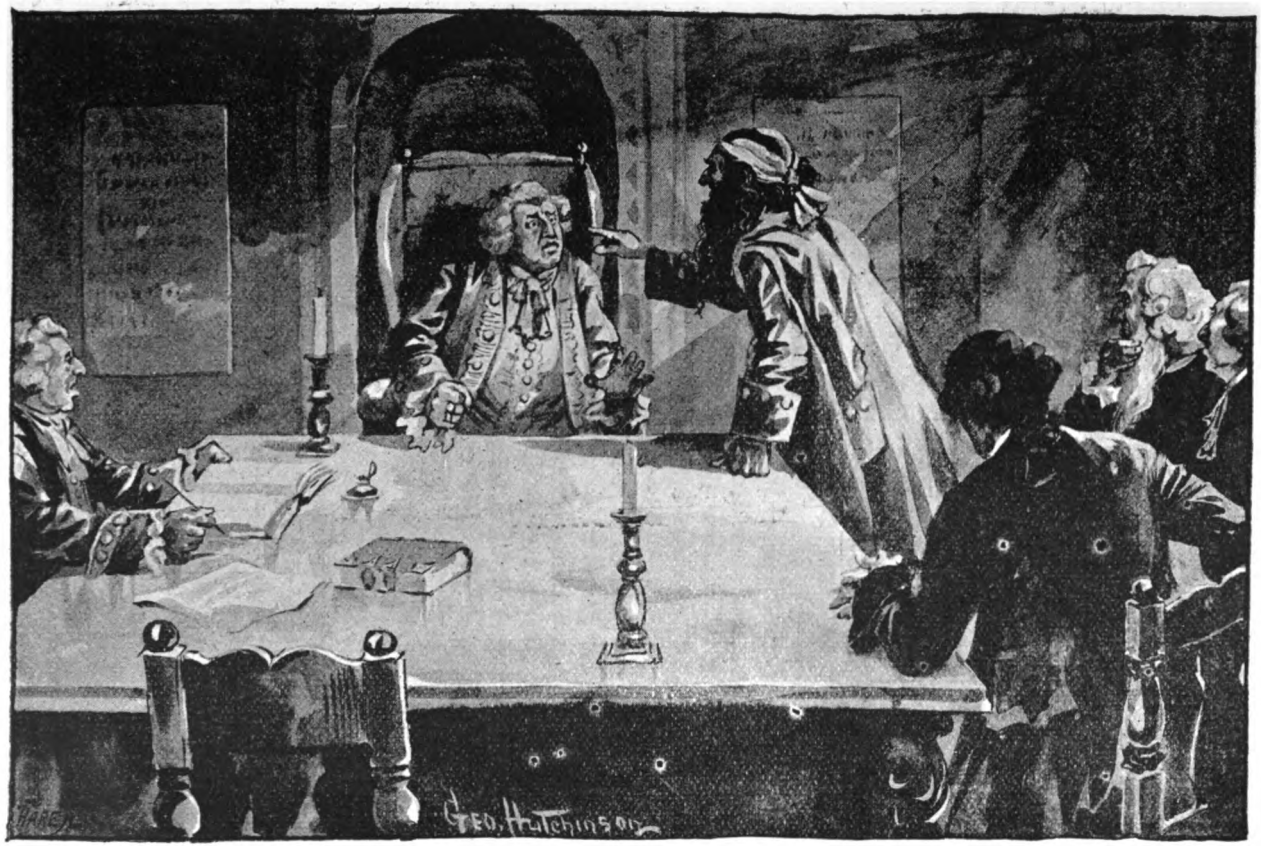
"Then the laws do not apply to me," retorted the beggar quietly. "It is only the Yahid who is privileged to do this, who is prohibited from doing that. No *Ascama* mentions the *Schnorrer*, or gives you any authority over him."

"On the contrary," said the Chancellor, seeing the President disconcerted again, "he is bound to attend the week-day services. But this man hardly ever does, sir." "I *never* do," corrected Manasseh, with touching sadness. "That is another of the privileges I have to forego in order to take your charity; I cannot risk appearing to my Maker in the light of a mercenary."

"And what prevents you taking your turn in the graveyard watches?" sneered the Chancellor.

The antagonists were now close together, one on either side of the President of the Mahamad, who was wedged between the two bobbing, quarrelling figures, his complexion altering momently for the blacker, and his fingers working nervously.

"What prevents me?" replied Manasseh. "My age. It would be a sin against heaven to spend a night in the cemetery. If the body-snatchers did come they might find a corpse to their hand in the watch-tower. But I do my duty—I always pay a substitute."



"'IF YOU DON'T STOP THIS SCANDAL INSTANTER, WE WILL SEND YOU HOWLING!'"

"No doubt," said the Treasurer. "I remember your asking me for the money to keep an old man out of the cemetery. Now I see what you meant."

"Yes," began two others, "and I ——."

"Order, gentlemen, order," interrupted the President desperately, for the afternoon was flitting, the sun was setting, and the shadows of twilight were falling. "You must not argue with the man. Hark you, my fine fellow, we refuse to sanction this marriage; it shall not be performed by our ministers, nor can we dream of admitting your son-in-law as a Yahid."

"Then admit him on your Charity List," said Manasseh.

"We are more likely to strike you off! And, by gad!" cried the President, tattooing on the table with his whole fist, "if you don't stop this scandal instanter, we will send you howling."

"Is it excommunication you threaten?" said Manasseh, rising to his feet. There was a menacing glitter in his eye.

"This scandal must be stopped," repeated the President, agitatedly rising in involuntary imitation.

"Any member of the Mahamad could stop it in a twinkling," said Manasseh sullenly. "You yourself, if you only chose."

"If I only chose?" echoed the President enquiringly.

"If you only chose my daughter. I am convinced she could not say nay to anyone present—excepting the Chancellor. Only no one is really willing to save the community from this scandal, and so my daughter must marry as best she can. And yet, it is a handsome creature who would not disgrace even a house in Hackney."

Manasseh spoke so seriously that the President fumed the more. "Let her marry this Pole," he ranted, "and you shall be cut off from us in life and death. Alive, you shall worship without our walls, and dead you shall be buried 'behind the boards.'"

"For the poor man—excommunication," said Manasseh in ominous soliloquy. "For the rich man—permission to marry the Tedesco of his choice."

"Leave the room, fellow," vociferated the President. "You have heard our ultimatum!"

But Manasseh did not quail.

"And you shall hear mine," he said, with a quietness that was the more impressive for the President's fury. "Do not forget, Mr. President, that you and I owe allegiance to the same brotherhood. Do not forget that the power which made you can unmake you at the next election; do not forget

that if I have no vote I have vast influence; that there is not a Yahid whom I do not visit weekly; that there is not a *Schnorrer* who would no. 'low me in my exile. Do not forget that there is another community to turn to—yes! that very Ashkenazic community you contemn—with the Treasurer of which I talked but just now; a community that waxes daily in wealth and greatness while you sleep in your sloth." His tall form dominated the chamber, his head seemed to touch the ceiling. The Councillors sat dazed as amid a lightning-storm.

"Jackanapes! Blasphemer! Shameless renegade!" cried the President, choking with wrath. And being already on his legs, he dashed to the bell and tugged at it madly, blanching the Chancellor's face with the perception of a lost opportunity.

"HE DASHED TO THE BELL."

"I shall not leave this chamber till I choose," said Manasseh, dropping stolidly into the nearest chair and folding his arms.

At once a cry of horror and consternation rose from every throat, every man leapt threateningly to his feet, and Manasseh realised that he was throned on the alcoved armchair!

But he neither blenched nor budged.

"Nay, keep your seats, gentlemen," he said quietly.

The President, turning at the stir, caught sight of the *Schnorrer*, staggered and clutched at the mantel. The Councillors stood spellbound for an instant, while the Chancellor's eyes roved wildly round the walls, as if expecting the gold names to start from their panels. The beadle rushed in, terrified by the strenuous tintinnabulation, looked instinctively towards the throne for orders, then underwent petrifaction on the threshold, and stared speechless at Manasseh, what time the President, gasping like a landed cod, vainly strove to utter the order for the beggar's expulsion.

"Don't stare at me, Gomez," Manasseh cried imperiously. "Can't you see the President wants a glass of water?"

The beadle darted a glance at the President, and, perceiving his condition, rushed out again to get the water.

This was the last straw. To see his authority usurped as well as his seat maddened the poor President. For some seconds he strove to mouth an oath, embracing his supine Councillors as well as this beggar on horseback, but he produced only an inarticulate raucous cry, and reeled sideways. Manasseh sprang from his chair and caught the falling form in his arms. For one terrible moment he stood supporting it in a tense silence, broken only by the incoherent murmurs of the unconscious lips; then crying angrily, "Bestir yourselves, gentlemen, don't you see the President is ill?" he dragged his burden towards the table, and, aided by the panic-stricken Councillors, laid it flat thereupon, and threw open the ruffled shirt. He swept the Minute Book to the floor almost maliciously, to make room for the President.

The beadle returned with the glass, which he well-nigh dropped.

"Run for a physician," Manasseh commanded, and throwing away the water carelessly, in the Chancellor's direction, he asked if anyone had any brandy. There was no response.

"Come, come, Mr. Chancellor," he said, "bring out your phial." And the abashed functionary obeyed.

"Has any of you his equipage without?" he demanded next.

They had not, so Manasseh despatched the Chief of the Elders in quest of a Sedan-chair. Then there was nothing left but to await the physician.

"You see, gentlemen, how insecure is earthly power," said the *Schnorrer* solemnly. "How is the saying of our sages verified—'The house that opens not to the poor opens to the physician.'" His eyes shone with unearthly radiance in the gathering gloom.

When the physician came he pronounced that the President had had a slight stroke of apoplexy, involving a temporary paralysis of the right foot. The patient, by this time restored to consciousness, was conveyed home in the Sedan-chair, and the Mahamad dissolved in confusion. Manasseh was the last to leave the Council Chamber. As he stalked into the corridor he turned the key in the door behind him with a vindictive twist. Then, plunging his hand into his breeches-pocket, he gave the beadle a crown, remarking genially, "You must have your usual perquisite, I suppose."

The beadle was moved to his depths. He had a burst of irresistible honesty. "The President gives me only half-a-crown."

"Yes, but he may not be able to attend the next meeting," said Manasseh. "And I may be away, too."

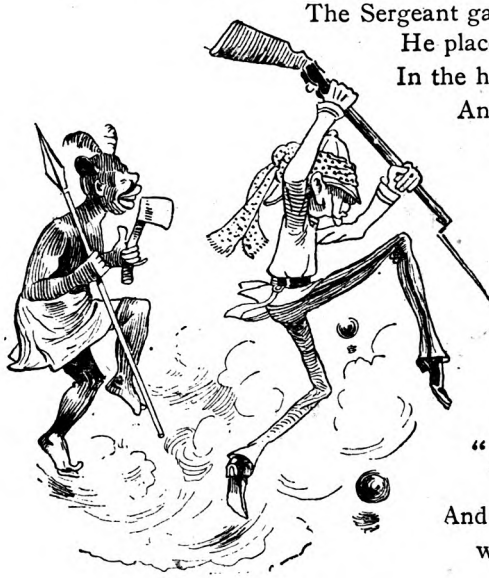
(To be continued.)

By M. Babington Bayley.

Illustrations by Scott Rankin.

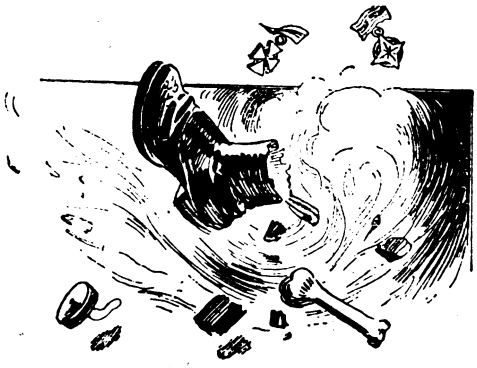
HIS name was Faust O'Grady,
And his character was shady,
And he 'listed in the British Infantree.
He was tall and thin and wiry,
And his temper it was fiery,
And he'd fight until he had no eyes to see.
He was sent to the Soudan,
For a first-class fighting man,
And he quarrelled with his Sergeant on the way;
It was all about a girl,
Who wore her hair in curl,
And who smiled on Faust O'Grady every day.
Every day, every day,
She smiled on Faust O'Grady every day;
And O'Grady's messmates tell us
That the Sergeant he got jealous,
And he made it warm for Grady all the way.

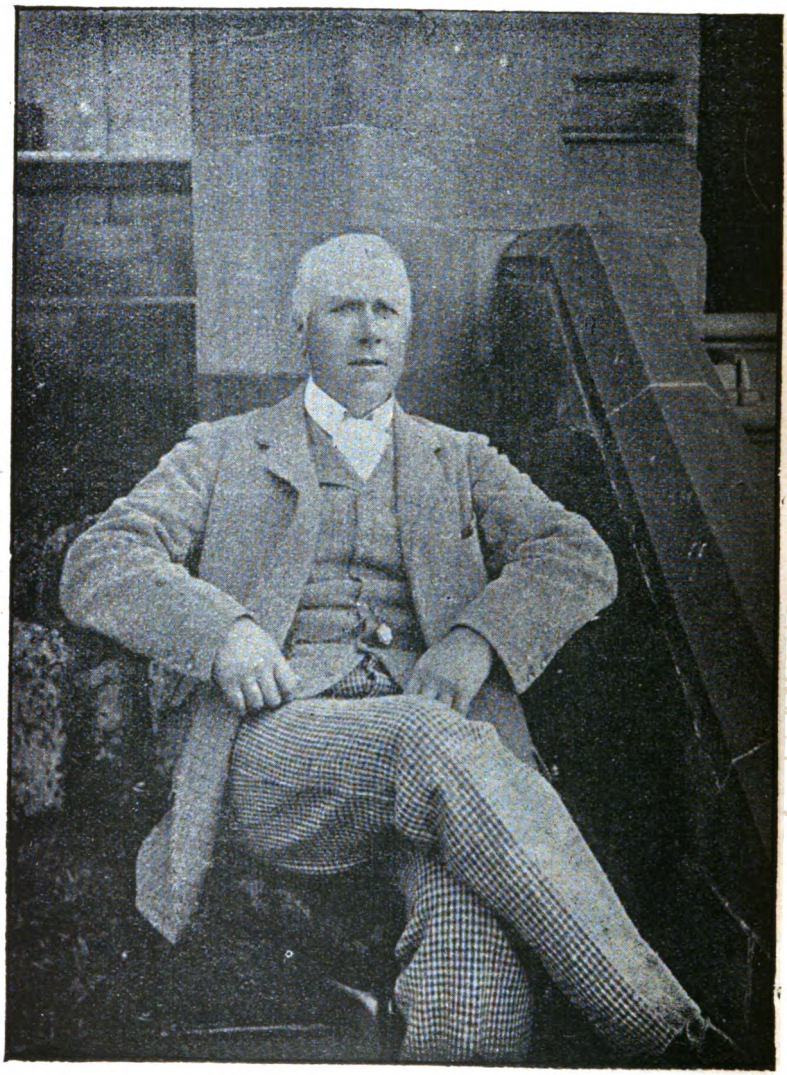
When they got to the Soudan,
And the fighting romp began,
The Sergeant gave O'Grady work to do.
He placed him on the right,
In the hottest of the fight,
And O'Grady fought till everything was blue.
But a cut upon the head,
From an Arab, laid him dead;
And when the Sergeant saw him lying there—
That Sergeant smiled and said,
"Dear old man, he's better dead;
And now I'll wed the girl with curly hair.
Curly hair, curly hair,
And now I'll wed the girl with curly hair;
And as for Faust O'Grady,
With his character so shady,
He may roast amongst the coals for all I care."



And the maiden dropped a tear
Over Faust O'Grady's bier,
And got married to the Sergeant very soon;
And all their friends agree
They're as happy as can be,
And their married life is like a day in June.
And they neither of them care
The shadow of a hair
That O'Grady went to join the roasting souls;

But when the Sergeant goes to dust,
As he ultimately must,
Oh, there'll be a lovely fight amongst the coals!
'Mongst the coals, 'mongst the coals,
Oh, there'll be a lovely fight amongst the coals!
I'd give millions for a sight
Of that world-transcending fight,
When O'Grady meets the Sergeant 'mongst the coals!





MR. FRANK LOCKWOOD, Q.C., M.P.

Lions in their Dens.

MR. FRANK LOCKWOOD, Q.C., M.P.

By Raymond Blathwayt.

Sketches by Mr. Frank Lockwood.

(Photographs by Messrs. Brigham, of Scarborough.)

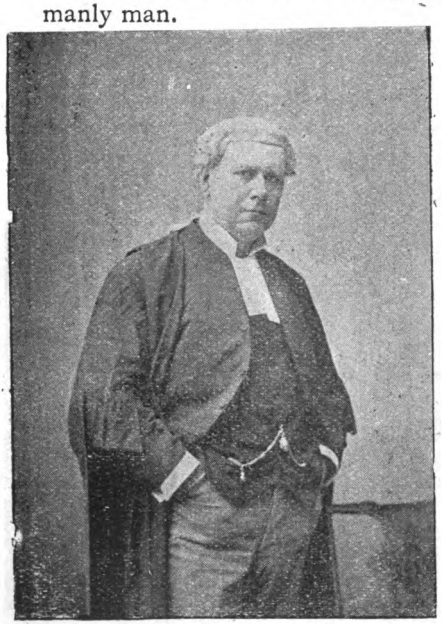
SCARBOROUGH Cricket Ground on a sunny summer day. Young Jackson—the joy of athletic Yorkshire—has just scored his century for Yorkshire *v.* the South. The air resounds with joyful shouts. "Don't the '*tykes*' enjoy it all, and won't they give him a cheer when he goes out to-night," said my host, Mr. Frank Lockwood, who sat next to me, himself no less keenly interested than his fellow-countrymen in the splendid play.

MR. LOCKWOOD'S HOUSE.

Mr. Lockwood is a typical Yorkshireman, and that is synonymous with saying that he is a typical Englishman of the very best kind; to use a popular slang phrase which will exactly express my meaning—he's as good as they make 'em. A great, broad-shouldered fellow, standing at least six feet-two in his socks, with a handsome, well-cut, clean-shaven, sunburnt face; a breezy, outspoken, generous-hearted man, full of life and energy and good-humour, and withal a keen, clever, and accomplished man. It was pleasant to note the manner in which he and his wife, who is no whit behind him in popularity, were received by high and low,

by rich and poor alike. The Radical member for York—and he is a staunch upholder of Mr. Gladstone—was, it was evident, a *persona grata* to those even of the most opposite political opinions.

And why, indeed, should he not be so, this stalwart country gentleman, this vigorous lawyer, this dignified Recorder of a great Northern town? He is, as the French would say, "all that there is of the most manly," and there is nothing that an Englishman so much admires, be he of what creed or politics he may, as a manly man.



MR. FRANK LOCKWOOD.

As we drove back to Cober Hill in the lingering Northern twilight, Mr. Lockwood pointed out to me the little reading-room which he has started for the young men of the village, and which is much frequented by them. For a moment he pulled up his pair of chestnuts—impatient to reach their stables—to speak to a young fellow hobbling along on his crutches. "Well, Jack," said he, after a brief conversation on the match we had just seen, "how about the match for the 9th? Remember, I trust to you to help me get up a good eleven to beat Mr. Johnstone's team." "That young fellow," he continued, turning to me as we drove on, "lame as he is, is one of the best athletes I have ever known, and don't you notice how keen they all are about sport of every description. Didn't his face light up when I told him Jackson had made his 'century'? We've lots of time for a chat before dinner," he continued, as we entered the house; "come into the smoking-room and I'll do some of those sketches I have promised you for *The Idler*. Let me see," said he, "we were talking this morning about the protection of witnesses from bullying counsel. Well, yes, I admit that a keen barrister is apt at times to overleap the bounds of

good taste. But the outcry that has recently been made is ridiculous. He is a bad advocate who asks any question likely to provoke the indignation of the tribunal. Both judge and jury are quick to resent any indiscretion. You must remember this, that if the issue of a cause depends on the credit of the witness, then the counsel is *bound*, in the interests of his client, to bring out any fact connected with the witness which might tend to his discredit. For instance, if it was known to a counsel that a witness had been convicted of perjury, it would be ridiculous in him to spare him the reminder of such a fact. Counsel sometimes want protection, I can tell you," went on Mr. Lockwood, with a hearty laugh of reminiscence. "I was defending a man at York once, who was accused of stealing cattle, 'beasts' they call them up here. I said to a witness, 'Now, my man, you say you saw so and so, how far can you see a beast to know it?' '*Just as far off as I am from you!*' he smartly replied. You may imagine the laugh there was against me. Believe me, witnesses are well protected, and by nothing more than by the fact that an indiscreet cross-examination is certain to put up the back of the tribunal. I am often amused, though, to note the difference between the entry and the exit of a witness from the box," and as he spoke Mr. Lockwood, who had been sketching rapidly all the while, handed me the picture of a trim, prim, self-satisfied parson (here reproduced), and a sketch of the same man—poor, miserable, washed-out wretch—after he has been undergoing torture at the hands of a clever ingenious cross-examiner. "Are you in favour," said I, as I laid aside the little sketches, "of a prisoner cross-examining or giving evidence on his own behalf?" "Emphatically I am," replied my host, "and it will become the practice before long, there is no doubt. The best proof that there is a strong feeling in favour of it is that all recent enactments state that the prisoner shall be able to give evidence. And, as a matter of fact, judges have of late years allowed prisoners to make statements in addition to those made by their counsel. In some cases a prisoner can defend himself much more effectively than counsel, simply because he *knows* the *whole* thing. But then he must have all his knowledge available, and the ability

BEFORE CROSS-EXAMINATION.

AFTER CROSS-EXAMINATION.

to make it clear to all. That is what would trip up so many," continued Mr. Lockwood, smiling to himself as he jotted down on paper his idea of a prisoner defending himself. "Counsel knows what to emphasise and what to pass over."

MISS MADGE LOCKWOOD.

"I suppose," said I, "that you would be in favour of keeping up all the old forms and ceremonies and the dignity of the law intact." "Yes," he slowly replied, "radical as I am in many things, yet, so long as the judge is the direct representative of the Queen, I think it is only right there should be a certain amount of ceremony, and the judges are, naturally, as they always have been, very tenacious of the dignity of the Crown; for if you remember, when

THE FRONT HALL.

George IV. was Prince of Wales, not Prince Regent, he was very angry with a certain judge who preceded him into the room at a certain legal dinner. But the judge stuck manfully to his point. 'Sir,' said he, 'I represent His Majesty the King.'

"I can remember an incident that once occurred within my own experience. I was on circuit, and a certain distinguished ambassador was travelling in the railway carriage with the judge and myself. 'Now, your Excellency,' said the Judge, 'when we reach this next station you will see an interesting sight. The sheriff in full uniform, and his chaplain in full canonicals, and a number of policemen and javelin-men, and others, will be there to receive me in state, as the representative of the Majesty of the Law of England. It will be a fine sight, I can assure you.' At this moment the train began to slow up, and, behold, a perfectly empty platform, a few porters rushing along and opening the doors, and we ourselves, judge, ambassador, and all, compelled to take out our own luggage, and to order a cab for the 'Majesty of the Law' to get to his lodgings in! There had been some mistake as to the train. I stole a glance at the ambassador, and he was bursting, simply bursting, with suppressed merriment. Circuit life," continued Mr. Lockwood, "is much altered from the good old days when the men were weeks together on the road. Now-a-days a man can run back to town after his day's work is over. Still, certain old traditions linger amongst us. For example—and it is a delightful instance of the perfect equality that is supposed to exist amongst the members of the Bar—the junior member present is *always* the President of the Mess, and the most dignified and learned Q.C. could not venture so much as to order a bottle of wine without his permission. But great changes are taking place now-a-days. Who now sees the old 'junior'; careful, methodical, prim and precise, always a thorough old gentleman, buried in his notes, to which he constantly refers as he addresses the learned judge? The modern 'junior' is quite a different

THE NEW-STYLE "JUNIOR."

THE OLD-STYLE "JUNIOR."

person. Smart, self-confident, well-dressed, very fairly eloquent, with his case at his fingers' ends, a very different type indeed, but a very good fellow, I can assure you. The present system of examinations results in young men having a much clearer knowledge of the leading principles of the law than was possible under the old system. Then, again, the debating societies, and the Law Students' Society, enable a young fellow to think upon his legs, which is by no means an easy matter."

Next morning was a very rainy one. "Can't make it out," said Mr. Lockwood at the breakfast table. "It reminds me of an

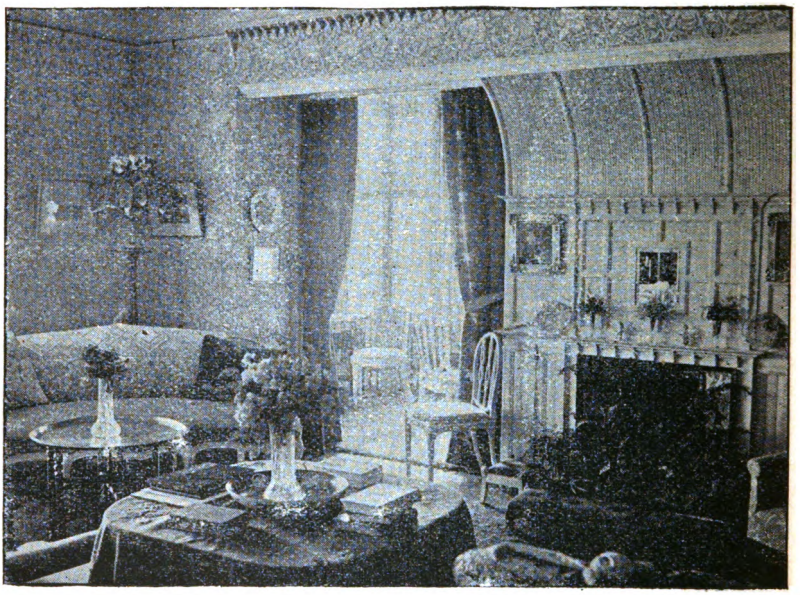
THE STUDY

old Yorkshire farmer who invested in a barometer for the first time in his life, and in which he placed implicit trust. The 'glass' went up and up and up, and still the rain came down and down and down. At last, in a frenzy of passion, the old chap took his barometer down from the wall and flung it into the garden, crying out, 'Well, then, go and see for thy sen!'" However, it cleared up later, and after our photos had been taken in the garden, and the ladies had gone for a ride, Professor Clifford Allbutt, the well-known Regius Professor of Medicine at Cambridge, Mr. Lockwood and myself, strolled down to their favourite resort, Cloughton Wyke.

Professor Allbutt, himself a magistrate, started a conversation on the humorous aspects of the Bar. This led to many anecdotes. "A man," said Mr. Lockwood, as we sat us down to rest by the loud-sounding sea—"a man, some years ago, was had up for stealing a horse. 'Yours is a very serious offence,' said the judge to him very sternly; 'fifty years ago it was a hanging matter.' 'Well,' replied the prisoner, with a certain logical reasonableness, '*fifty years hence it mayn't be a crime at all.*'" "What was that story about the spade that you told me long ago, Lockwood?" said the Professor. "Oh!" replied our host, "you mean the man who was had up for stealing a spade. That is quite true, too. The magistrate before whom the case was being tried was a stupid, but a well-meaning, conscientious old fellow as ever lived. He carefully looked up 'Archibald's Criminal Law' to find a precedent on which he could convict and punish the man. But he was unable to do so. 'I can't find anything under the word "*spade*," said he, 'although I see that a man was convicted and severely punished for stealing a *shovel*. You have had a very narrow escape, but you may go this time.'" This led to a discussion on the vagaries of the Great Unpaid whom Mr. Labouchere is so fond of pillorying in *Truth*. "It is not in the Superior Courts as a rule," said Mr. Lockwood, "that you find such a ridiculous disparity between the sentences that you so often see now-a-days. It is chiefly before the magistrates, who, without any legal training, have to depend upon their clerks. As long as you have magistrates appointed as they are now, they ought to be selected from all classes. As Recorder of Sheffield I have had considerable experience of magistrates, and one of the best I know is a working-man magistrate. As a rule they are the *fine fleur* of the working classes, and they are quite equal, intellectually, to the ordinary county gentlemen who sit with them on the bench." I suggested a stipendiary magistracy, recruited from the army of clever but

UNIONIST IDEA OF A HOME RULE JUDGE IMPARTIALLY DISCHARGING HIS JUDICIAL DUTIES.

briefless barristers. "No," replied Mr. Lockwood, "I would not wish a stipendiary magistracy, and so deprive us at one fell swoop of the present men, who, in many cases, do their work admirably. You must remember that on nearly every county bench you have men who have joined the Bar, not to practise there, but simply to fit themselves for their magisterial duties in after life as county gentlemen. At the same time I cannot be too strong in favour of some adjustment of the present system of sentences. They can only be

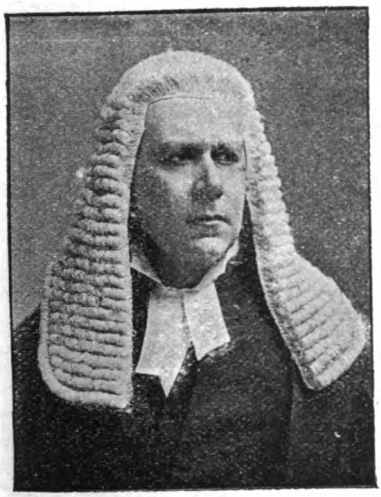


THE DRAWING-ROOM.

rectified by the establishment of some scale of punishments which would have to be sufficiently elastic to enable the man to judge reasonably, for it is impossible to produce a scale for every conceivable case. But, of course, judicial discretion ought to be limited."

Professor Allbutt referred to Mr. Lockwood's recent very amusing lecture on certain aspects of the celebrated and immortal trial in *Pickwick*, and this reminded me of the scathing manner in which Dickens had shown up the Court of Chancery in his oft-quoted case, "Jarndyce *v.* Jarndyce," in *Bleak House*. "Oh! I could say a lot about costs as they exist under our present

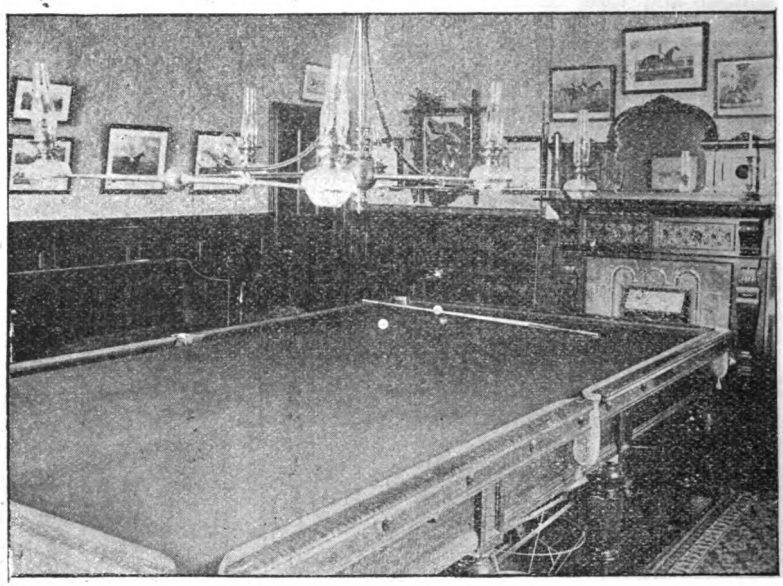
system. And one of the most unfair things about it is that winner and loser alike are heavily taxed. The old Yorkshire cock-fighters had a favourite phrase which exactly describes what I mean: 'The winning cock loses some feathers,' and that is very true at the Bar. The winning party finds it impossible at times to get all his costs. Party and party costs are not always obtainable, although solicitor and client always obtain them. Now, in my opinion, the unsuccessful litigant ought to pay all costs which can be legitimately charged. It is extraordinary," he went on, "how very moderate the French law charges are when compared with ours. I will tell you of an interesting case which came beneath my own notice a year or two ago. I was staying with some friends of mine near St. Malo. By some chance or other, a young English fellow I knew got into legal difficulties and came to me for advice. Well, I need scarcely say I could do no more than generalise. 'We must consult a French advocate,' said I, 'he will tell us exactly what we ought to do.' Now it chanced that very day that I had read in the local paper of the *véhémence extraordinaire* of a certain *avocat* in St. Malo, so I said to my friend, 'We'll go and consult this "extraordinarily vehement" barrister. Evidently he is our man.' 'Yes,' said Charlie—that was his name—'that's all very well, but I am not going to be let in for a lot of costs and expenses if I can help it.' 'Well,' I said, 'we *must* see somebody on the matter, for I can't advise you on all the intricacies of the French law.' So off we started,



MR. FRANK LOCKWOOD.

COMBINATION SUIT. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR THE LONG VACATION.

and after a while discovered our man, to whom we explained the



THE BILLIARD ROOM.

whole case. He listened attentively, turned up the *Code Napoléon*, and no end of law books, and at last delivered his opinion, clear, keen, clever as you could wish for. Then came the question, 'How much?' My friend sat anxiously waiting. '*Combien, m'sieu? Deux francs, s'il vous plait!*' There, that will show you the difference between our costs and the French costs, and it is the same right through." As we toiled up the hill which led from the sea-shore to the pretty village of Cloughton, in which Mr. Lockwood's house is so charmingly situated, I referred to the extraordinary "innocence" of the judicial bench. "They never seem to know the meaning of the most ordinary slang phrase, Mr. Lockwood," said I. "They ask you who Henry Irving is, or Lottie Collins, or what '*oof* may mean. Now is this innocence of theirs real or assumed?" Mr. Lockwood smiled

THE STAGE IDEA OF THE M.P.

as he replied: "I think we may safely say it's a humorous assumption. Sir ——," mentioning a well-known sporting judge, "very often pretends to be ignorant of racing matters, and thereby always excites a good-humoured laugh. The law would be very dry and uninteresting, and, indeed, the life would be very hard and trying if it weren't enlivened now and again by an innocent joke; and you have noticed that no loss of dignity is ever involved in these little wanderings from the strict paths of judicial solemnity and

PREPARING TO START.

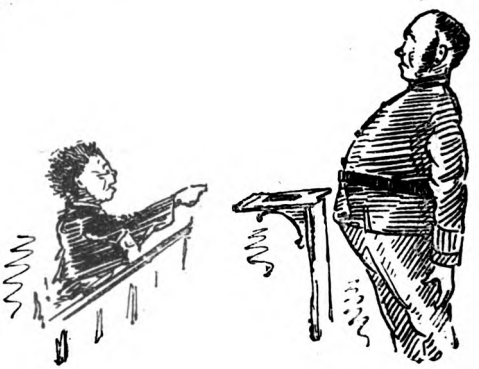
propriety, although the newspapers are rather hard on some of us lawyers when we venture to unbend a little. I can remember once I was acting as counsel for W. S. Gilbert in a case in which he charged a man with introducing into one of his works certain commonplace, not to say vulgar, lyrics. I was pleading the case before the judge." And as he spoke, Mr. Lockwood, who is a capital actor, gave a subdued imitation of himself, his fine resonant voice lending great effect to his story. "And here, my lord, is an instance of what I was saying. The defendant has introduced these lines into the opera, 'Yes, we'll mash 'em, oh,

we'll mash 'em, we'll mash the little dears.' Of course," continued Mr. Lockwood, "the whole court was convulsed with laughter, until the quiet voice of the judge induced a deep silence. 'But perhaps you will explain to the court what the word "mash" may mean.'"

That night we all went to a village festivity. Here one encountered much of the old Yorkshire life, and witnessed many Yorkshire customs which still survive. At the end of supper the chairman, a fine old countryman, stood up to propose the health of Her Majesty and the Royal Family. "I wish to propose t' health of Queen," said he, amid a great rapping of knives and forks, "and of Prince of Waäles, and t' rest of Royal Fam'ly. I hope that when t' Prince wears t' Queen's shoes he'll be as good a män as his mother's been.

"And then there's our neighbour, Muster Lockwood, who's with us this evenin'," and here the cheering was vociferous. "I'd like well to propose t' health of Muster Lockwood, and Mrs. Lockwood, and the Miss Lockwoods. I am under th' impression that as yet there're no boys, but, having regard to the strong air of Cloughton, I lives in hopes there'll be one yet."

And so, amid the cheers and laughter of the assembled villagers, all of whom are devoted to the genial lawyer who has taken up his residence amongst them, and who has made himself so well and so deservedly beloved, we took our leave and passed out into the summer night.

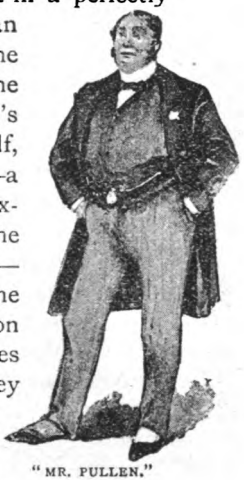


"THE PRISONER DEFENDED HIMSELF."

Bellamy.

By James Payn. Illustrations by Dudley Hardy.

WHEN as a very young man I first came up to town, I had a letter of introduction to the Pullens. Mr. Pullen was a rich man, who had made his money in our part of the world, and had retired to London to spend it. He had made it in a perfectly honest manner as, what is called in Cornwall, "an adventurer"—that is to say, in mining. All the great Cornish fortunes have been made much in the same way, but not so recently. It was Mr. Pullen's father's misfortune to have been a miner himself, to have worked the pick with his own hands—a circumstance which had caused the son to be excluded from the society of the neighbourhood. The status of a county family is fixed by its distance—in generations—from trade, and in Cornwall by the date of its emergence from the pit. But London society cares nothing for these matters. It takes people, both in a good and an ill sense, for what they are worth, and asks no questions about either their relatives or their antecedents. It welcomed Mr. Pullen because he was a hospitable fellow, and Mrs. Pullen because she was good-natured and took so kindly to the prosperity that had befallen her, and if it had been told by any mischievous person that Mr. Pullen's father had been a miner, it would probably have said that it was an argument in favour of early marriages, and if it had known better would not have cared.



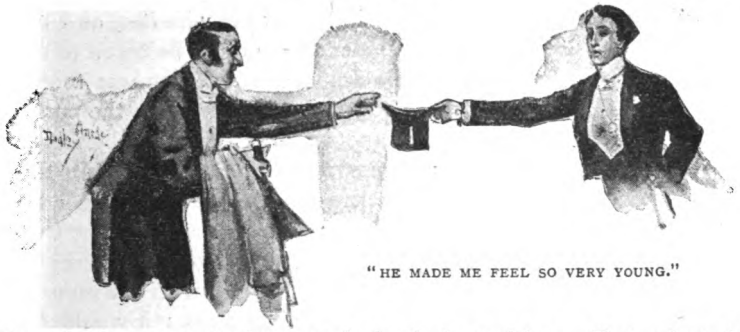
"MR. PULLEN."

Indeed, though at Porthperran we "fought shy" of this excellent couple, we acknowledged their merits, and had no objection (so long as it was not at home) to cultivate, or at all events make use of, their acquaintance. Hence it happened that when I got my first clerkship at Messrs. Bullion and Ingot's, I received an introduction from my people to the Pullens in London. We believed—and they even believed themselves—that they *were* in London, but the fact was, that though their residence could hardly be called suburban,

they were not quite in what is humorously termed "the village." They were a good way off from my lodging, in King Street, St. James, and I did not often take advantage of their hospitality, though it was generously tendered. The people one met at their dinner-table were, like themselves, middle-aged, and not much to my youthful mind. I think they were City people with whom Mr. Pullen had had commercial relations, and they talked of matters I did not understand; if there had been daughters in the family it would doubtless have been different, and I should have joined the lawn tennis parties I often saw playing in the public garden at the back of Vigo Square; but there were no young people to attract me.

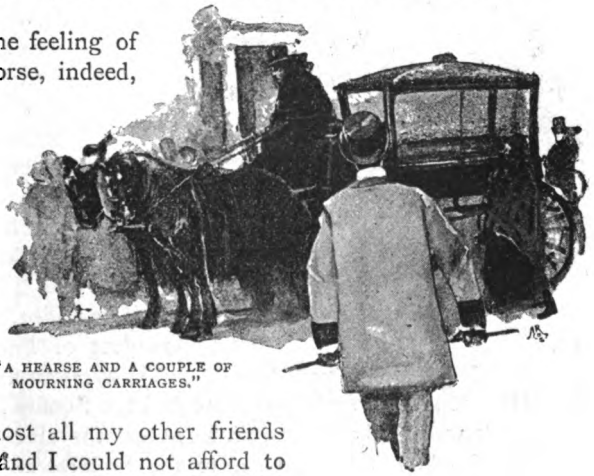
"BELLAMY."

Moreover, I must honestly add that there was another reason which disinclined me to much intimacy with the Pullens, or rather, another cause, for it could hardly be called a reason; it was Bellamy their butler. To those who have not read *David Copperfield* it may seem incredible that any young gentleman should be made uncomfortable by somebody else's butler; but then I was very young, and Bellamy made me know it. He was solemn, sedate, and intensely respectable; one has heard of butlers who looked like bishops, but this one looked like an archbishop. He had been recommended to the Pullens on their arrival in town, and been with them ever since. Mrs. Pullen once described him to me as a Perfect Treasure, but I think she was secretly afraid of him, and I am quite sure her husband was, though he tried to persuade himself that he was actuated by love and not fear. On our first acquaintance, I thought that perhaps Bellamy had found out that his master's father had been a miner, and thereby got the upper hand of him, but that was when I was still full of my Porthperran notions. His former places had been (or he said they had been) in great establishments with persons of title, and I believe it was that absurd circumstance which mainly weighed with the simple couple, and established the man's authority in the household. He ruled it, not indeed with a rod of iron, but as it were with a pastoral staff; there was an unctuous dignity about him which would have



"HE MADE ME FEEL SO VERY YOUNG."

adorned the very highest ecclesiastical position. But what *I* objected to was what in those salad days of mine I called his infernal patronage; he made me feel so very very young, and when I resented it, made me feel younger. I have known him at a dinner party give me a wineglass less than other people; it may have been an accident, but I firmly believed it to be a hint not to mix my liquors; and once when I looked in at luncheon time, he omitted to give me a napkin, as though I were not an adult. I am ashamed to say that Bellamy was certainly "a cause," as old Burton calls it, why my visits to the Pullens were so few and far between.



"A HEARSE AND A COUPLE OF MOURNING CARRIAGES."

It was with some feeling of penitence and remorse, indeed, that after a very long interval I started one September afternoon to call in Vigo Square. I knew I ought to have done so any time within the last two months, and also that I was doing it then because almost all my other friends were out of town, and I could not afford to be so particular as at other times in my choice of hospitalities. A good dinner at old Pullen's, even though Bellamy might reproach me from the sideboard with my youth and inexperience, was better than dining alone at a restaurant, for club I had none.

Imagine, then, how my conscience smote me when I drew nigh that hospitable door to find a hearse and a couple of mourning

carriages before it! Either poor Pullen or his wife (for, as I have said, they had no family) were evidently about to be taken to their long home. Indeed, even while I looked, the coffin was brought out, and, after it was borne away, I saw Bellamy in the portico, deeply but respectably affected, and waving a farewell blessing to the lamented remains. I was not more uncharitable than most men of my age (with whom cynicism is only popular because they think it a sign of maturity), but the reflection did strike me that I had never seen a more hypocritical looking scoundrel in my life. As to asking him any question in connection with the mournful occasion it never entered into my mind to do so; it would have seemed a wrong to the memory of either host or hostess, and I came away without knowing which of them had departed, though with sincere sorrow for the event itself.

In the papers I could find nothing about it, and we had no common friends, so there was nothing for it but to wait a decent interval and then call with "kind inquiries." This dutiful attention was put a stop to in a very unexpected manner, in a fortnight afterwards, by my meeting Pullen himself in the City. "It must have been his poor wife, then," was my first thought, and yet, though he looked less beaming than usual, he was scarcely so cast down as a devoted husband who had so recently become a widower ought to have been, and moreover he was not in mourning. On catching sight of me, he smiled rather feebly (or, as I thought, coldly, as well he might, considering my long neglect of him), and exclaimed: "Why, you are quite a stranger. How long is it since you were at Vigo Square?"

"HE SMILED RATHER FEEBLY."

It was really more than three months since I had crossed his threshold; but I had been to the Square, as I have said; and I thought it best to rest my excuses at once upon a solid basis.

"The fact is, my dear Mr. Pullen, I did get last month so far as your house, but under the circumstances—it was on the 18th" (he would surely remember the date, I thought to myself)—"I did not, of course, go in."

"And why should you not have gone in?" he enquired airily. "Glad to see you, I am sure, at any time, had we been at home."

"But on so melancholy an occasion—a domestic calamity, my dear sir."

"What the deuce do you mean? *I* have had no domestic calamity."

I thought this very cruel, and, indeed, brutal of old Pullen; for his wife had been a very nice person, and he had always seemed to be very fond of her.

"Well, I don't know what you call it; but I saw the hearse standing at your door, and the body brought out and put into it."

"You did, did you?" he said, looking very grave and earnest. "You saw that at my house, did you?"

"Most certainly I did."

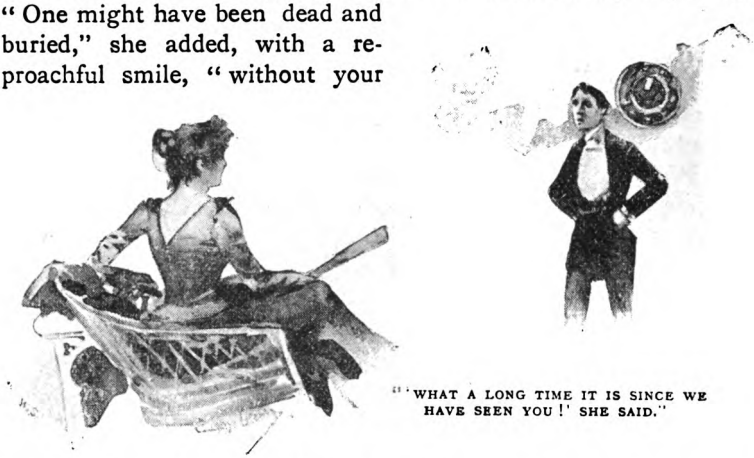
"Indeed?" He looked very thoughtful and depressed, like one who has received worse news than he is prepared for. "Well, my young friend, be so good as not to say anything about it till you hear from me." He shook my hand with nervous energy, and hurried away.

I had wronged the old fellow; it was evident that, so far from being unmoved by the calamity that had befallen him, it had unhinged his mind. Otherwise, he could never have doubted what I had told him of the 18th of September, and begged me, almost in the same breath, to keep the matter a secret.

In about a week afterwards, which I must say I thought rather soon after so severe a bereavement, Mr. Pullen asked me to dine in Vigo Square. I accepted the invitation out of pity for the lonely widower—he had written, "You will excuse there being no other guest"—more than from natural inclination; the house had never been very attractive to me, and without its kindly hostess I felt it would be less so than ever.

But if dinners in Vigo Square had been rather dull, it was fated that this one should restore the average in the way of sensation. In the first place, it was rather a shock—though an agreeable one—to have the door opened for me by a strange manservant. For the life of me, being so young and emotional, I could not help saying, "Why, where is Bellamy?" To which the man replied, with polite regret, "I have only been here a few days, sir, and don't know the gentleman." It seemed so strange that anybody should have been in that house, if only for a few minutes, and not have known Bellamy. In the drawing-room another shock, also agreeable but much more violent, awaited me in the person of Mrs. Pullen.

"What a long time it is since we have seen you!" she said. I did not say how much longer I had expected our separation to last, for I was too frightened at the moment to say anything. "One might have been dead and buried," she added, with a reproachful smile, "without your



"'WHAT A LONG TIME IT IS SINCE WE HAVE SEEN YOU!' SHE SAID."

knowing it." She might, indeed. "But you did come, though you did not call, did you not?" she added, in a more forgiving tone, and this time she laughed outright in a very queer and hysterical way. What could be the meaning of it all? She could not have gone out of *her* mind because her husband had *not* been buried on the 18th ult., but it was possible that she had lost some other relative upon that fatal day.

It was a great relief to me when Pullen joined us; he looked graver than usual, but not so distressed as when I had last seen him, and I noticed that he was more affectionate to his wife even than usual, as though she were in need of moral support. We three sat down to an excellent dinner (where I had my proper allowance of wineglasses and a napkin), and I enjoyed it all the more that Bellamy was not there to patronise me, and convey his pity for my youth and inexperience in his every action; but, of course, I missed him, as one misses other things which one does not regret. If a dinner in Vigo Square without him was not like Hamlet without the Prince, it was at least like Hamlet without the King: his majesty's absence was most discernible. When the dessert had been put on the table, and the new man withdrawn, I could no longer restrain my curiosity.

"And what," I enquired, "my dear Mrs. Pullen, has become of your excellent Bellamy?"

"YOU NEVER LIKED BELLAMY."

"Don't be hard upon him; I mean upon my husband," said Mrs. Pullen, in a gentle, pleading voice. "His confidence has been misplaced and abused. I know you never liked Bellamy; our sense of loss, the breaking down of our belief in him, will be unintelligible to you."

I looked at my three wineglasses in doubt as to what reply I ought to return; I looked at my napkin, and felt sure in what direction duty pointed. "My opinion of that man, my dear madam, was a very bad one."

"I know it," she answered quietly; "we should therefore not say anything to you against him now, but that we owe it to you to tell you all, since it is thanks to you that his wrongdoing has been revealed to us."

Thanks to *me?* I was glad to hear it, it seemed a very just sort of "Nemesis" if it had happened so, but I could not conceive how it *had* happened, and I said so.

"Well, my dear husband and I had, as you know, the greatest confidence in Bellamy. We would have entrusted him with untold gold, and, in fact, did entrust him with what was its equivalent: and I am bound to say that we never missed anything—not a silver spoon."

"Then the man was at least honest," I said, rather disappointed.

"Not at all," she answered quietly. "He was only honest, I am afraid, in small things to conceal his knavery in great ones."

"Risked a sprat to catch a herring," observed Mr. Pullen, who, so far as proverbs went, was quite a Solomon.

"Yes; he so imposed upon us that when we went abroad in the summer we left this house for more than three months entirely in his hands; never asked anyone even to look in to see how matters were going on; the other servants were as much under his control—and, indeed, much more so—as under our own; and we felt quite secure. Everything was forwarded to us with the greatest regularity."

"A more methodical man I never knew," interpolated Mr. Pullen. "He even sent us the circulars. Surplusage is no error."

"And when we came back," continued my hostess, "everything looked just as it should be. Bellamy seemed charmed to see us: gave an excellent character of the servants; and had been so economical with the coals that we wondered how it had been managed."

"Well we might," put in the old gentleman, "for there were more coals than when we went away."

"Good gracious, how could that be?" I enquired.

"How indeed? That was the first thing that excited our suspicions," said Mrs. Pullen.

So it seemed that surplusage *was* an error.

"Somehow or other, I don't know how it was, but we got the impression that somebody had been in the house while we had been away. There was no more evidence of it than of the existence of a ghost, but we couldn't shake ourselves free of it. If they were Bellamy's friends, we felt that they must have been quite respectable; but it was not nice to suspect that even Bellamy's friends had been using our house and sleeping in our bed, was it?"

"It certainly was not," I assented; "but why did you not speak to him on the matter?'

"Well, you see, my husband felt it rather a delicate subject to broach—to Bellamy. And he tried to hope for the best: till he met you in the City, and you spoke to him of the funeral at our house. There ought not to have been any funeral, you know."

"Still, they are things you can't help, and which will occur," I remarked.

"Yes, yes, but you don't understand; when you told my husband *that*, he made enquiries of the neighbours. We have always thought it so nice that one's neighbours in London never trouble themselves about one, as they do in the country; but sometimes this works inconveniently. They had seen the funeral, and one or two of them had even been so good as to pull down their blinds, thinking it was one of *us;* but they had thought no more about it afterwards on finding that the house had been let."

"The house let? Do you mean that *your* house was let?"

"Yes, that is just how it was; Bellamy had let it for three months furnished for twelve guineas a week. He said he had authority to do so from his master, and thereby pocketed a hundred and fifty pounds, besides his double wages (because he charged the tenant for attendance)."

"Bellamy was a most excellent man of business," observed Mr. Pullen, with a sigh. "He saved me a mint of trouble; but in this matter he exceeded his instructions."

"So it certainly appears," I remarked drily.

Again Mrs. Pullen said with her pleading eyes, "Don't be hard upon him; let him down as easily as you can."

"All would have been well for poor Bellamy," observed her husband, "but for the misfortune of his tenant—or, as it should have been, *our* tenant—dying, as it were, upon his hands. A circumstance of that kind, in so short a lease, never entered into his calculations. There was only just time to bury him respectably, and get things into proper order, before we got home. He must have been very much hurried and put about."

"You have had no scruple about sending him to gaol, I do hope," I said. "A man who has abused your confidence so infamously" (I might have added "and insulted your guest," for I felt it) "deserves no mercy."

Mrs. Pullen upheld her hands in horror. "Send Bellamy to gaol! Of course we could never do that. We have had to part with him, but we should be sorry indeed if his future should be wrecked by a single act of—of——"

"Miscalculation," murmured her husband.

"Just so. That is why we have invited you, my dear young friend, here alone, to beg that, so long as the revelation can do him any injury, you will say nothing to anybody about Bellamy's mis—well, his letting our house for us; not even at Porthperran!"

"SAY NOTHING TO ANYBODY."

A Condensed Ghost.

By W. L. Alden.

Illustrations by E. Bonnestayne.

MY friend Professor Bruyn was one of the leading chemists of the day. He had discovered two new metals, and had written several articles showing that Christianity was a delusion unworthy of the attention of an intelligent man. Consequently he was held in great respect as a scientific person, and his views on political questions were regarded, by those holding similar views, as being extremely valuable. But, although he rejected religion, Bruyn accepted ghosts, and had no doubt whatever of the existence of Mahatmas. This belief, however, he kept mainly for private consumption, and the general public had no idea that he believed in anything. With me he talked freely, for although we had been at the University together, we nevertheless continued to be firm friends. Every Saturday night I used to step across to Bruyn's laboratory, which was quite near my lodgings, and spend the evening in scientific conversation, tempered with tobacco. While I did not, and do not, believe in ghosts, I was always interested in Bruyn's theories and statements as to his ghostly experiences, and the coolness and certainty with which he insisted that he had nearly as much knowledge of ghosts as he had of acids and alkalies occasionally staggered me.

"SCIENTIFIC CONVERSATION, TEMPERED WITH TOBACCO."

Bruyn lived a few miles out of London, in a quiet Surrey village, where he had his chief laboratory, and conducted most of his investigations. His London laboratory was a much smaller affair, and was attached to the lecture-room where he delivered his lectures. His country house was an old one, and, according to him, simply swarmed with ghosts. He maintained that every old house harbours ghosts, although not one in ten thousand is ever visible. "You'll never find either mice or ghosts," he one day remarked, "in new houses. They seem to dislike everything that is new. On the other hand, the walls of houses that are, say, seventy-five or a hundred years old, are full of them. I have tests by which I can detect the presence of invisible ghosts, and I have by this means proved that forty or fifty ghosts come out of a single hole in the wainscoting of my bedroom every night. They are nearly all old ghosts, you understand. A ghost is usually visible so long as it is only a year or two old, but it gradually becomes more and more attenuated as it grows older, until it finally becomes completely invisible, and its presence can only be detected by delicate chemical tests."

"CALLED ON ME, ACCOMPANIED BY A SERVANT.

"Why don't you publish the results of your researches into ghosts?" I asked.

"Because I don't want to be considered a lunatic by all other chemists. I mean, however, to prepare a paper on ghosts, which will be published after my death. By-the-bye, you shall edit and publish it if you please, provided, of course, you are not a ghost yourself by that time. I can assure you it will make a sensation."

Bruyn scarcely ever came to my lodgings, and I was accordingly a good deal astonished when one evening he called on me, accompanied by a servant whom I had never before seen. It

struck me that there was something rather odd about this servant, who glanced into my drawing-room before seating himself in the hall to wait for his master, but I thought no more of it at the time.

Bruyn was looking worn and somewhat haggard, and I asked him if anything was the matter. He assured me that he was quite well, and had only dropped in for a friendly chat, and, of course, I made him welcome. He filled up his pipe, and after smoking in silence for a few moments, said, "Do you remember that story in the *Arabian Nights* where a fisherman uncorks a bottle, and a cloud of vapour rushes out of it, which presently condenses into the shape of an Afrite, whatever that may be?"

I told him that I remembered the story, and that I was rather surprised to find that he was addicted to reading so unscientific a work as the *Arabian Nights*.

"That story is the true record of a scientific fact, the knowledge of which has been lost for ages, but which I have rediscovered. I read the story one day when I had nothing better to do, and it gave me the hint which has led to the greatest discovery of the age. That unknown Arabian writer knew that ghosts are purely gaseous, and can be liquefied under pressure. That Afrite was simply a ghost that had been liquefied and imprisoned in a bottle. When the fisherman opened the bottle the pressure was removed, and the Afrite resumed its gaseous form. Solomon was evidently a chemist, and was acquainted with Papin's Digester, or some apparatus of the same general nature. He had discovered how to condense ghosts, and the bottle that the fisherman found sealed with Solomon's seal had been filled in Solomon's laboratory. The Biblical legend which says that Solomon was the wisest of men probably had a very substantial basis of truth."

"If ghosts consist merely of gas, as you say they do, why don't you liquefy a few?" I asked. "Liquid ghosts, put up in bottles, would have an immense sale, especially about Christmas time. 'Try our bottled ghosts at ten shillings the dozen' Why, you could make a fortune by bottling and selling ghosts, and then in course of time you would be made a baronet." I said all this thinking it a rather nice bit of sarcasm; but Bruyn answered me by taking out of his pocket a bottle which he placed in my hand.

The bottle was of the size technically known as a four-ounce bottle, and was apparently made of block tin, or, at all events, of some whitish metal.

A piece of thick but perfectly transparent glass, about an inch in diameter, was let into the lower half of the bottle, and the

mouth was hermetically closed, apparently by a process of welding. There was, however, a tube, with a valve and stop-cock arrangement, running through the neck of the bottle. As for the contents, as they were visible through the glass, they consisted of about a tablespoonful of a colourless and viscid fluid of about the consistency of treacle in cold weather.

"IS THIS A BOTTLED GHOST?"

"What is this?" I said, looking from the bottle to Bruyn. "A bottled ghost?"

"Precisely," he replied. "That bottle contains the ghost of an Irish Informer who was shot from behind a hedge a year ago. His ghost came to my house, which is very popular with Irish ghosts, and when I caught him he was fully six feet high. He liquefied under a pressure of about two atmospheres more than is required to liquefy carbonic acid gas. As you see, he is now

reduced to the dimensions of a tablespoonful, but if you were to turn the stop-cock and release him, he would almost instantaneously resume his natural size and form."

"This is wonderful!" I exclaimed, more than half-believing what Bruyn so solemnly told me. "Tell me all about it."

"I have often told you," replied Bruyn, "that my house is full of ghosts. New and visible ones are constantly coming to the house. I have caught most of them, but others will come to take their places, so that the supply is not likely to fail."

"BOTTLING A GHOST."

"So this is really a liquefied ghost?" I said, staring at the bottle. "If you can liquefy a ghost, why can't you go further and solidify one? Then you might put them up as tabloids."

"That is what I hoped to do," he answered, "and I supposed that if I could convert a ghost into a solid substance, that substance would be an exact replica of the ghost when in the flesh. But a little reflection will show you why this is impossible. You cannot convert a ghost into a body any more than you can convert the body of a man into the three-story brick house in which he died. It is perfectly easy to solidify a ghost, provided you use the requisite amount of pressure and cold. I have repeatedly done it, but the experiment is really of no value. So long as you have your ghost in a bottle, and can preserve him indefinitely in that condition, it is of no consequence whether he is a liquid or a solid."

"Tell me how you succeeded in bottling your ghost," I asked. "Of course, you use a bottling machine?"

"I had an immensely strong glass receiver made in the shape of a bell glass, such as we use for collecting gases, and I con-

verted a part of the floor of my bedroom into a pneumatic trough. I ought to tell you, by the way, that, although a ghost can pass through porous stone or moderately thick wood, it cannot pass through glass. This is not merely because glass is denser than wood, but because it is a non-conductor of electricity, and in some way, which I confess I do not understand, ghosts have a peculiar association with electricity. For instance, they all come out whenever there is a thunderstorm, and I have seen half-a-dozen at a time in my room during a magnetic storm, when the aurora was active. But, as I was saying, I suspended my receiver from the ceiling of my room in such a way that when a ghost passed under it I could drop it over him and imprison him. The next thing was to place him in the compressing machine—one which I made myself, and which is a great improvement on Papin's. As soon as I liquefied the ghost I transferred him to a bottle and hermetically sealed it. That is all. You see that it is a very simple process."

"Does the process hurt the ghost at all?" I enquired.

"I fancy not, but it is of no consequence if it does. Sentiment cannot be allowed to stand in the way of science. I have had ghosts protest in the most violent manner against being liquefied, but, of course, I could not allow their prejudices to interfere with my experiments. Moreover, it is really a great advantage to a ghost to be liquefied and preserved in a bottle. It prolongs his ghostly existence by precisely the length of time that he is kept in the bottle. I have an American Protectionist ghost in a bottle in my laboratory. Suppose that he is kept for fifty years, what a curiosity he will be! Whereas, if I had not caught him, he would become completely dissipated, that is to say, would cease to have any visible existence, in the course of three or four years at furthest."

"It may be very interesting," said I, "to have a collection of bottled ghosts, but what practical use can you make of them?"

"That, my friend, is a very stupid question. What practical use can you make of liquefied carbonic acid gas? Yet the success of the first man who liquefied it was of immense value to science. It is my part to prove that ghosts can be liquefied. Someone else will find a practical application of the discovery. It would be possible, perhaps, to run a small motor with condensed ghosts. If you can keep up the supply of bottled ghosts, you can utilise their expansion when released from pressure in the same way that the gas engine utilises the expansion caused by the repeated explosion of gas-jets."

Bruyn had much more to say on the subject, but I need not repeat it. I had never known him to be so talkative before, and at times he betrayed an irritability which I had never before noticed in him. Once or twice I wondered if he had been dining too freely, but I knew that he was the most abstemious of men, and I dismissed the idea as soon as it had occurred to me. About ten o'clock he went away, leaving the bottled Irish Informer with me as a present, but begging me under no circumstances to risk letting the ghost escape. On the doorstep he turned, and said, "Oh! in case anything should happen to me, I should like to have you publish my discovery. You can support your statements by showing the liquefied ghost that I am leaving with you. As for the other bottled ghosts in my laboratory, the chances are that my executors would throw the bottles away without troubling themselves to find out their contents."

"BETRAYED AN IRRITABILITY WHICH I HAD NEVER BEFORE NOTICED."

Of course I promised that I would comply with Bruyn's wishes, and, thanking me warmly, he went away with his attendant. The next day I learned from a paragraph in the *Morning Post* that "the eminent chemist, Professor Bruyn, whose mental condition had for some time past given much uneasiness to his friends, had been sent on a long sea voyage under charge of a physician." The news, though startling, did not surprise me, when I recalled Bruyn's unusual manner the night before, and his conversation concerning bottled ghosts. There could not be a doubt that my poor friend was mad, and that his alleged discovery of the liquefaction of ghosts was purely a hallucination.

Bruyn never returned from his long journey, but died suddenly while passing through the Red Sea. His cousin, who was his only heir, took no sort of interest in chemistry, and I presume disposed of Bruyn's bottles, whether full or empty, to the junk man. At any rate, Bruyn's bottled ghosts, if he really had any in his laboratory, disappeared.

As for the bottle which Bruyn had given me, I put it away on a shelf of my library, and forgot its existence. Nearly a year after my poor friend's death I remembered the bottled ghost, and determined to investigate it. The colourless viscid liquid was still in the bottle, and I wondered what the substance could be that Bruyn in his madness had assumed to be a liquefied ghost. The stop-cock turned with some little difficulty, but I found that I could open it, and, placing the bottle on my desk, I turned the stopcock to its furthest point. In an instant the imprisoned air rushed out with tremendous force. I kept my eye fixed on the square of glass, and could see that the liquid swelled and flashed into vapour as the pressure under which it had been kept was removed. In its turn the vapour rushed out of the stop-cock precisely as the Afrite must have rushed out of Solomon's bottle. Instead, however, of assuming the form of a ghost—which I supposed to resemble the human form—the vapour, in a vast and formless cloud, filled the room. It was cold and suffocating, and had moreover the most intolerable smell that I had ever smelt. My cat, who had been sleeping peacefully on the rug, howled dismally, and tore round the room as if she were mad, searching for some way of escape. As for myself, I tried to reach the door, but fell in a fainting fit before I could find it.

"THE IMPRISONED AIR RUSHED OUT."

When I came to myself the vapour had totally disappeared, having found its way out through a broken pane of glass, which had evidently been broken by the cat. The empty bottle stood on the table, and the horrible nauseating stench still lingered in the room. I threw open all the windows, and hurled the bottle into the middle of the street. Then, by dint of sprinkling carbolic acid liberally on the carpet, I succeeded in partly

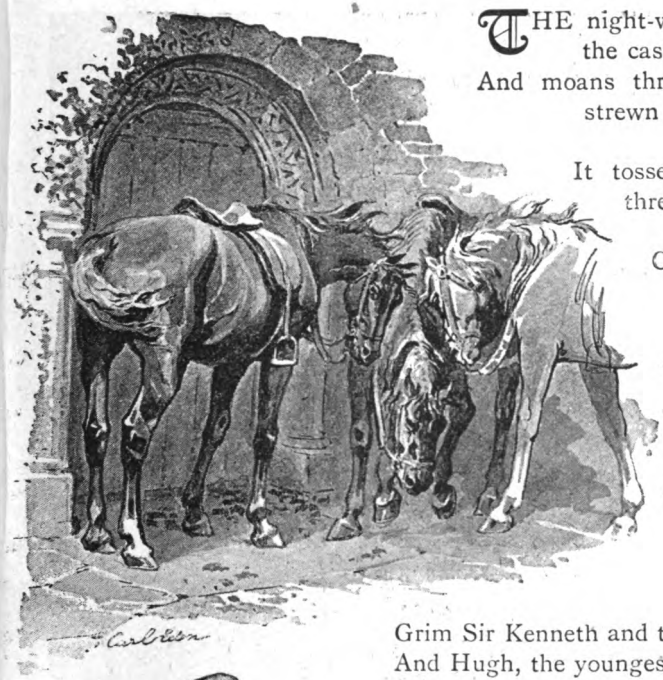
suppressing the stench, but it was days before the last trace of it disappeared.

Was Bruyn right, and was the vapour that I released from the bottle nothing more nor less than a ghost? Frankly, I do not venture to decide this question. I ought, of course, to have opened the bottle in the presence of some scientific man, who could properly have investigated the thing. As to one point, however, I am sure. Either that bottle did contain the ghost of an Irish Informer, or else Bruyn had succeeded in discovering a gas giving forth the most tremendous and intolerable odour ever known in the annals of chemistry.

"I FELL IN A FAINTING FIT."

A Ballad.

By Riccardo Stephens. Illustrations by Carl Eden.



THE night-wind wails round the castle wall,
And moans through the rush-strewn dining-hall.

It tosses the manes of three steeds which wait,
Champing their bits at the postern gate.

To them through the darkness silently
Come from the castle their masters three—

Grim Sir Kenneth and tall Sir Dare,
And Hugh, the youngest, so debonair.

And with them cometh the Lady May,
Their younger sister so fair and gay,

Yearning to meet her lover dear,
Who wooed her in secret all last year.

To-day, while hunting, her brothers say,
They met her love on his homeward way.

And ere they left him these three did swear
No more to hinder their sister fair.

Sir Kenneth hath mounted his steed again,
With a firm fast hand on the bridle rein.

With a swift kiss on her lips so gay,
Sir Dare hath lifted his sister May.

Bidding her clasp her brother's waist,
Then turning himself to mount in haste.

Sir Hugh, the youngest, is last of all,
And payeth no heed to his sister's call:

"Why rideth our Hugh thus pale and slow?
And why doth he ever so silent go?"

"Sister, a stag at the river side
Pressed him full sorely before it died."

"Brother, thy gauntlet is wet with blood!"
"Nay, it is damp with the river flood."

"I feel a wound in thy horse's side."
"He fell in breasting the river-tide."

"Hark to the raven, brother! Who saith
To meet with a raven forebodeth death?"

"The dead hart drifteth toward the sea,
And the raven knoweth as well as we."

"Brother, I pity the lonely doe"
"Nay, she must die, and the fawn also!"

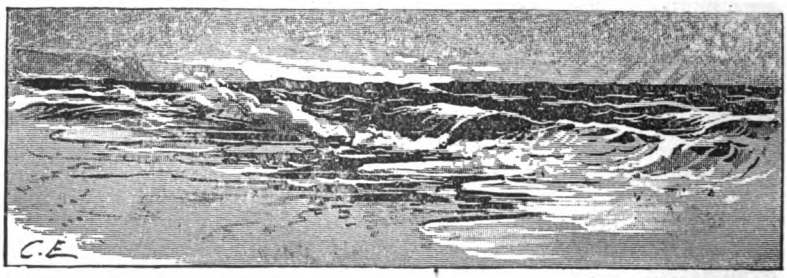
* * * *

The raven called for his mate that night,
For the doe was dead ere the morning light.

Three steeds return from the storm-swept shore;
They bear three riders in place of four.

The faces of two gleam stern and pale,
Heading for home through wind and hail.

The youngest, and last, is like to death,
And sobbeth a name beneath his breath,



Turning wild eyes towards the shore
To a face that shall haunt him for evermore.

Story of a Deccan Filly.

By Hume Nisbet.

Illustrations by St. M. Fitz-Gerald.

MY friend Captain Barney, of the 10th Smashers, told me about a filly he owned in Lucknow, which I think worth repeating for the benefit of those who like horses and dogs.

It happened that his Deccan pony was brought to bed at a time when any increase of this kind to his possessions was inconvenient and undesirable, so having mentioned his dilemma to Joe, the regimental farrier and blacksmith, who was at the time acting the part of midwife, that worthy at once offered to take the four-legged youngster off his captain's hands, and relieve him of all further anxiety.

"TOLD ME ABOUT A FILLY."

Thus Clara, the little filly, became the property of Joe, the blacksmith and farrier, or rather, as she began to grow and run about the barracks, she became, in a sense, the daughter of the regiment.

The forge where Joe worked stood at the end of the barracks, which lies about three miles out of the city of Lucknow, so that there was plenty of room for Clara to exercise her long legs, and grass enough to satisfy her other natural cravings, but the singular part of the story, which I daresay most of the men of the

10th Smashers who knew Clara can verify, was the strange tastes she developed under the guidance of a chum called "Budzart," a half-bred terrier, who also condescended at times to acknowledge Joe as his owner, and with whom the filly had been brought up without a break in their friendship.

"Budzart" means "black sheep," and this artful terrier mongrel was richly deserving of his title, for he was the greatest thief and most disreputable dog in the cantonment, and poor little Clara wasn't long in his company before she became almost as bad; the nobility and vegetarian instincts peculiar to the equine nature were so thoroughly demoralised by this sad example, that she shared in the loot which Budzart pilfered, and grew as much attached to bones, beef, mutton and such like tit-bits as he was, and only betrayed her patrician parentage by using the grass as a kind of dry salad to her roast or raw fowl, roast or curried it might be if Budzart had visited the kitchen, raw and unplucked if the poultry yard had been laid under contribution by this robber and his degenerate accomplice.

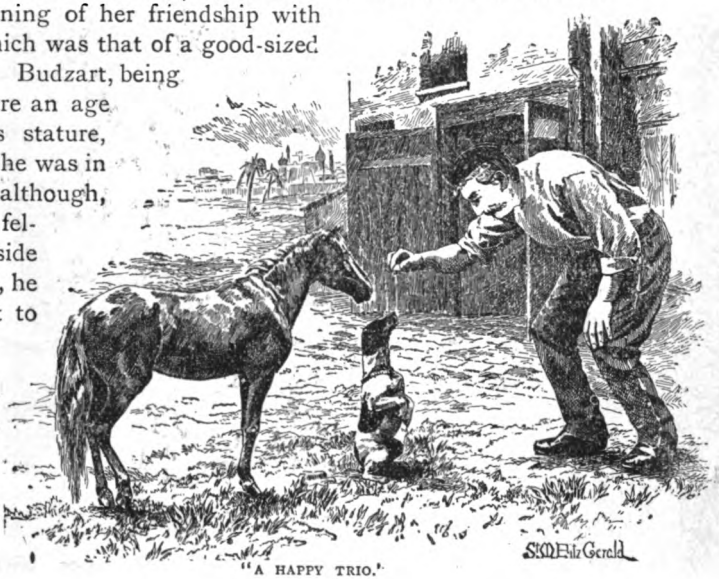
As Clara assimilated her nature to that of her friend, so Budzart did his best to meet her half way, that is, they spent their nights together on one blanket at the foot of Joe's bed, and their days in running and frisking about Dilkusha, for all the world like a pair of reckless puppies, rolling about and biting each other in sport, Budzart eating, or making believe to eat, the grass when there were no bones handy, and kicking up his short hind legs the way a young horse does, while Clara bounded and gambolled as like a small dog as her long legs would permit her.

It was one of the most comical sights to see this pair of friends together at their mischief or sport; you saw peculiarities about the dog which were not dog-like, and about the filly which appeared almost uncanny in the daughter of a respectable and well-drilled regimental mare. In the early morning, when Joe came over to his smithy to begin work, the pair, perhaps sometimes oversleeping themselves, would scent him out and trot after him, the filly nibbling at his trousers on the one side, while the dog nibbled away on the other; what the one did, the other was sure to do his level best to imitate, both uniting in their passionate affection for their good-natured master.

Never such a happy trio could be imagined as those friends were of an early morning before the day's work began, or the sun flamed out of the mists, the domes and minarets of the Imambara starting out greyly in front of the luminous space, with the city of

history, shrouded in silvery tones, in the further distance, and this pair of nondescripts, fresh from their beauty-sleep, having a moment or two of tenderness and sympathy with humanity, as represented in Farrier Joe, before they began their day of impish pleasure.

Clara never grew any bigger after the first week or two of her babyhood; perhaps it might be with her as it is with those small boys who take too early to smoking; her unnatural and acquired carnivorous habits may have stopped her growth, or her imitative gifts were so great, with that undersized spirit of evil so constantly before her eyes and filling out her imagination, that even nature was arrested; certain it was that she stuck to the size she had been at the beginning of her friendship with Budzart, which was that of a good-sized greyhound. Budzart, being of too mature an age to alter his stature, remained as he was in that respect, although, like a little fellow alongside of a big one, he did his best to reach up to his companion, and might have succeeded had he only been young enough at the start.



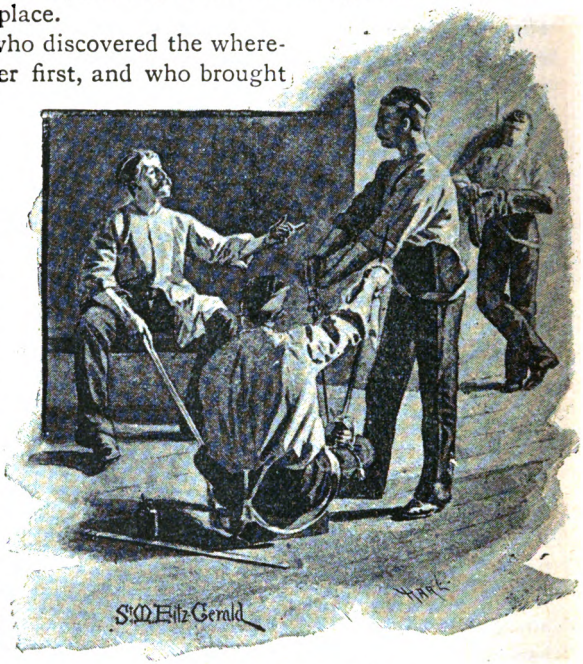
"A HAPPY TRIO."

With Budzart and Clara so constantly before his eyes, Joe, who was a bit of a reader and a great deal of a philosopher, always maintained that Darwin was perfectly within reason with his theory. "Why, boys, see here," he would say, "if a dog and a horse can grow so like one another in a few months, what is there to prevent an oyster developing into a man, with all the time they have had to work it out?"

Even the most philosophical of thinkers have their moments of weakness, and Joe, in one of his off-times, got into the cells for

a fortnight, and then the better qualities of his two friends came out strongly; they left off stealing and took to moping instead, spending their time prowling about the camp in search of their lost master, and refusing to be comforted even by the most tempting delicacies until they had discovered his prison, after which, until he was released, they took up their posts at the outer door, and waited patiently, eating what was brought to them, but never quitting the place.

It was Clara who discovered the whereabouts of her master first, and who brought the dog to his cell. For six or seven days they went sniffing and whimpering through the cantonment, a pair of dejected and ownerless orphans, prying into the men's mess rooms, searching high and low, separating sometimes to work out some individual plan, but never resting from their labour of love. At last the men found Clara kneeling down, as if satisfied, on the outer steps, with her nose pressed against the under portion of the door, and whinnying with delight, when shortly afterwards she was joined by her mongrel mate, who also displayed his satisfaction by the short joyful barks which are unmistakable. Then they became quiet, and waited patiently until Joe's time was up, as if they knew all about the matter, and what he was in for.



"'WHY, BOYS, SEE HERE!'"

This remarkable friendship lasted for a good number of months, while the fame of it travelled over Lucknow and to the districts beyond, so that visitors came from all quarters to have a look at them, and many a good bid Joe had for that wonderful filly—offers which he always refused, to his credit be it said.

However, at last the hour of parting came; Joe was ordered home, his time having expired, and although he could take the dog with him, there was no chance of him getting a passage for poor Clara, so she had to be sold.

"BROUGHT THE DOG TO HIS CELL."

A Nawab in the district having heard that the filly was for sale sent down for her, and, besides offering a large price, promised to treat her like a household pet; therefore Joe, at the advice of his captain and comrades, who knew she would be well treated, took the rupees and let Clara go.

It is best to draw the veil over that last parting between Clara and her master, and Budzart and his mate. Joe got disgracefully drunk after he had seen her off by train, and spent the night running amuck, for that is the only way Tommy Atkins can show his grief. Next day he went aboard sullen and moody, but his comrades appreciated the cause of his sulks, and excused him.

Budzart followed his master, as he was in duty bound to do, but he kicked up his hind legs no more, and passed the voyage with his head between his forepaws and his nose glued to the deck, growing mangy and commoner looking than ever.

As for Clara—well, the Nawab acted like a royal prince up to his promises, and was as indulgent a master as horse or filly could have found; he allowed her to have her free will with his private gardens and Zenana; the ladies petted her, and tried to win her affections with presents of bon-bons and sweetmeats, but the foolish filly was inconsolable.

"JOE GOT DISGRACEFULLY DRUNK."

For the first few weeks she ate what was given to her, and waited on the coming of her master and friend, no longer gambolling, but standing at odd corners looking out towards the station, with eyes growing luminous at the sound of the incoming Dak trumpet drivers, and the light dying out of them when no Joe or Budzart came.

Then she took to going down to the brink of the Kû-â, or sacred well, where she would brood and watch her reflection for hours at a time until the coming of the ladies to pray and bathe drove her away to some other lonely seclusion, there to think out the cause of her misery and ponder upon the best cure.

She was a disappointment to the Nawab and his court, for they had heard about her tricks, and now she refused to exhibit her abilities, all because a common farrier and a mongrel dog had deserted her. She had no appreciation of the elevation she had received. Women, as well as horses and dogs, are sometimes blind to good fortune, and prefer affection and hard lines; horses and dogs more often than women perhaps, and Clara was one of the most eccentric of her wilful sex.

At last hope must have died within her big heart, for one morning, after moping for days and eating nothing, she took a sudden gallop amongst the Nawab's flowers before him and all his females, as if resolving to cast away black care, and then with a bound *à la* Budzart she plunged head foremost down the sacred well—as clear a case of *felo de se* as ever man, mongrel, or broken-hearted filly committed.

Photography as Evidence.

By E. A. Jelf.

Illustrations by Messrs. Boning and Small.

IT cannot so soon have escaped the public memory that Mr. Gladstone made a speech at Edinburgh in the autumn of 1890, in which, after describing to his audience a certain alleged practice of the Royal Irish Constabulary, he gave utterance to these words: "Now, that stands upon evidence, *because* it has been made the subject of a photograph." It is this "*because*" which it is our purpose to analyse. How far, we shall ask, and under what conditions, can photography afford evidential proof? What can photography infallibly establish? And what abuses or delusions are possible in this kind of proof?

"SHADOWED."

The matter under discussion in the speech to which we have referred was the so-called "shadowing" in Tipperary. The Rev. David Humphreys, it was said, found himself closely accompanied by policemen in uniform, who walked shoulder to shoulder with him wherever he went, and when he stopped in the street these policemen—his veritable "shadows"—also stopped. Here is the photograph which was given in evidence of this fact; nor do we for one moment take it upon ourselves to deny that in this particular instance the photograph truly represents what was the actual

state of things. But it by no means follows that, because Mr. Gladstone's conclusion was correct, his reason was a valid one. Can a thing be really said to stand upon evidence at all, because it has been made the subject of a photograph? We propose to prove that *photographs can lie*, and we will do this by proving that their testimony can be secured for things which everyone must at once perceive to be quite impossible.

MR. HENRY IRVING AND MISS LOTTIE COLLINS.

Here is the first story. Mr. Henry Irving has been rehearsing a comic dance for production at the Lyceum. Whether it is to be introduced into the next revival of *Hamlet*, or to form part of some new burlesque, we cannot say. But he has been seen dancing with Miss Lottie Collins for his partner, and joining her in a performance of the world-famous "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay." Mr. Irving's execution of that measure is most spirited, and is such as will certainly draw a large house if it is produced on the boards of the Lyceum.

Coming to the next story, a young man yielded to temptation, and took an opportunity of breaking open his master's till. While he was thus engaged, he saw a ghost, the ghost of his mother. There

was no doubt that it was indeed a ghost, for the figure was unsubstantial and transparent. Dickens has told us of a ghost which was so transparent that one, looking through his waistcoat, could see the two buttons on his coat behind! Not less transparent was the ghost of the present tale—you could see the table through it.

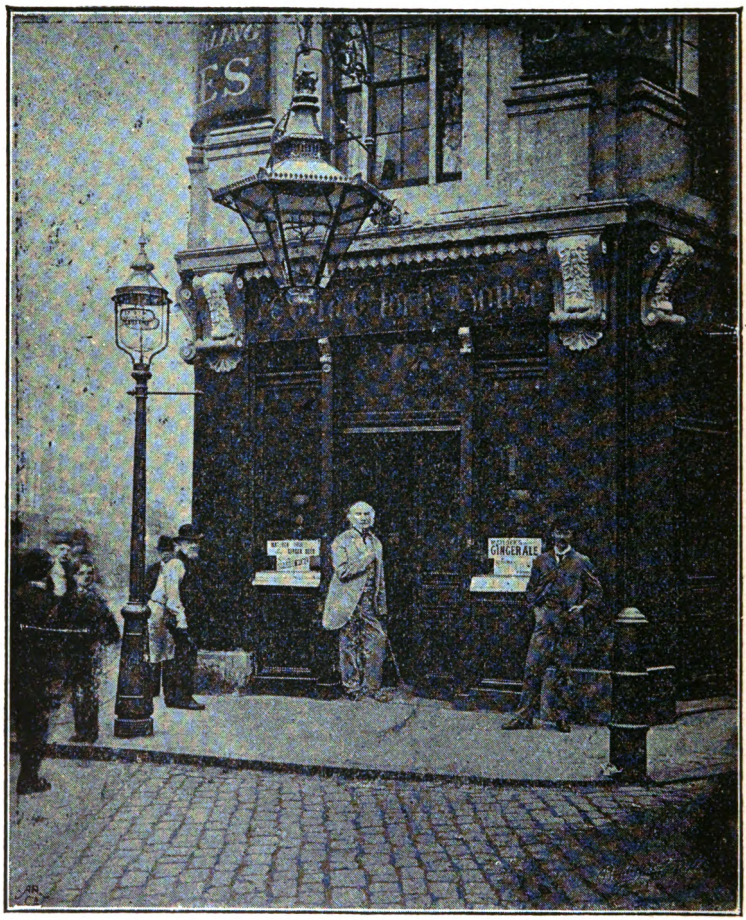
7

"HE SAW A GHOST."

The young man, wishing to be able to prove that he had really seen a ghost, summoned a photographer, and bade him use his skill. And now that ghost also "stands upon evidence."

But if the right hon. gentleman still doubts that photographs can lie, the next of our illustrations will surely set the question at

rest for ever in his mind. For no one knows better than himself that it is the representation of a state of things that never was." It is more than absurd to suppose that there is any foundation in fact for a photograph which shows us the veteran statesman issuing from a public-house in Seven Dials. Yet there he is in the



photograph; it is certainly he himself; it is certainly a public-house in Seven Dials, which any of our readers may identify for himself by going to the spot.

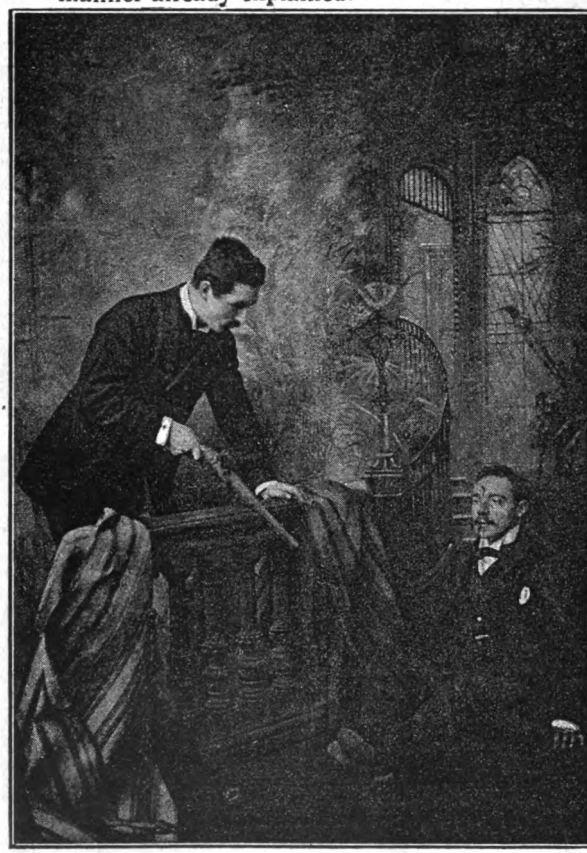
"Of that there is no manner of doubt,
No probable possible shadow of doubt —
No possible doubt whatever."

It will, of course, be obvious that the three photographs which prove the three impossible stories which we have given are misrepresentations. They have, indeed, been prepared on purpose to expose the worthlessness of the evidence which photography affords. The explanation of their manufacture is simple enough. Since the plate on which a photograph is taken is only acted upon by light, part of the plate may be covered up, and that part will receive no impression. Thus we first cover up that part of the plate where Mr. Irving's head or Mr. Gladstone's body is to appear: the rest of the photograph is then taken upon the rest of the plate. Then all except the space which was covered up before is covered up, and on to the space which was covered up before we photograph Mr. Irving's head or Mr. Gladstone's body. The only difficulty is to make the joining of the two parts of the photograph so neat that the fraud will not easily be detected; the joining must not be a straight line, but a jagged one, which is far less easily observed.

SHOOTING HIMSELF.

The diaphanous appearance of the ghost is not much harder to explain: the lady who sits for the ghost retires before the exposure is complete, but the rest of the picture is allowed its full time, and thus comes out in a normal way. Hence the contrast between the ghost and the bodily man.

In the same way in which these photographs were made, a representation of something very like the "shadowing" in Tipperary might have been obtained. There would be no difficulty in taking a photograph of "shadowing in a street," though "shadowing" never took place, if the photograph were manipulated in the manner already explained.



AN APPARENT MURDERER.

The evidence of photography must then be very warily received, otherwise the most wicked lies might be considered as proved. Take, for example, the case of an unscrupulous photographer who wished to be avenged upon an enemy whom he hated. He might produce a photograph in which that enemy appeared to be murdering another man; and yet the murdered man and the supposed murderer might have been a thousand miles apart at the time when the photograph was manufactured. Such a photograph is actually here produced, having been obtained by the processes already detailed. The two persons represented together in it never saw one another.

Hence it will be seen that photography can prove almost anything. The accompanying representations of the same man in two places at one and the same time may here be adduced as a

final *reductio ad absurdum* of the proof afforded by a photograph. According to these the Doppelgänger of German legends is a well authenticated fact; a most literal *alius ipse* is an evidenced phenomenon—who tells good stories to his counterpart, who writes upon the back of his counterpart, and stands face to face with him as he lights his cigarette. These and the other accompanying photographs prove—do they not?—that a man can be in two places at once doing two different things! In the light of the previous explanations, the trickery of these photographs (and of that wherein a man is depicted shooting himself across a table) will be easily understood. The occasional failure of the experiment will illustrate the nature of the trick, as an example will clearly show. This photograph of a man executing himself is a failure. The executioner has raised his axe to behead his victim, and all would have been well, *if he had been wearing dark-coloured trousers!* But the photographer had not reckoned what the effect of his white flannels would be, and, in the result, head, block, and thigh have been mixed up in most delightful fashion.

ONE MAN IN TWO PLACES. (1.)

ONE MAN IN TWO PLACES. (2.)

Caution is the happy mean between reckless credulity on the one hand and unreasonable suspicion on the other. In a court of law a photograph is not necessarily taken for granted when produced in evidence. The

photographer is, or may be, called to *prove* his photograph; and his evidence must stand the test of cross-examination. If necessary, the negatives must be produced, and the manner in which the photograph was taken is considered a fair subject of enquiry. If, however, this evidence is satisfactory, the photographic evidence may be of high value. For though a photograph may give a false suggestion, or may even be made the instrument of a "lie direct," there are other human infirmities to which it is *not* liable. A photograph cannot forget, nor can it hesitate; while it does not fail to notice small details which the human eye might have neglected.

ONE MAN IN TWO PLACES. (3.)

MAN EXECUTING HIMSELF.

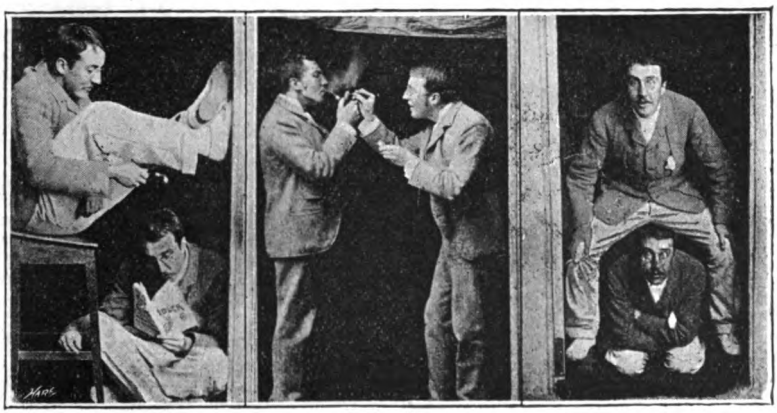
It can record a multitude of tiny circumstances with a completeness and an accuracy which it is impossible to overpraise. And some things may be proved by photography which are inaccessible to ordinary human observation. An instantaneous photograph will show the position of the four legs of a racehorse at a given moment of time, when he is at full gallop, or may explain the path of a lightning flash, but these phenomena are far too rapid to be distinctly and easily observed by the human eye as they occur. Such photographs are, therefore, of a peculiar interest.

Science owes much to photography—not only by way of illustration, but by way of proof of things which might otherwise

be difficult to observe. Take, for example, the photograph here annexed. It represents the retina of the human eye.

THE RETINA OF THE HUMAN EYE.

It is always difficult to realise that what we see is not the things without us, but the picture of them within our own eyes. Look carefully at this photograph, and you will see the representation of a man in his shirt-sleeves within the eye, and the question has been raised whether it might not be possible, by photographing the eye of a murdered man, to discover upon what or whom the deceased last looked before his death, and thus possibly to obtain a clue to the identity of the murderer. This experiment suggests that such a thing might be possible.



ONE AUTHOR.

Exchange is Robbery.

(In Two Parts.)

By Richard Marsh. Illustrations by Sydney Cowell.

I.

"IMPOSSIBLE!"

"Really, Mr. Ruby, I wish you wouldn't say a thing was impossible when I say that it is actually a fact."

Mr. Ruby looked at the Countess of Grinstead, and the Countess of Grinstead looked at him.

"But, Countess, if you will just consider for one moment. You are actually accusing us of selling to you diamonds which we know to be false."

"IMPOSSIBLE!"

"Whether you knew them to be false or not is more than I can say. All I know is that I bought a set of diamond ornaments from you, for which you charged me eight hundred pounds, and which Mr. Ahrens says are not worth eight hundred pence."

"Mr. Ahrens must be dreaming."

"Oh no, he's not. I don't believe that Mr. Ahrens ever dreams."

Mr. Golden, who was standing observantly by, addressed an inquiry to the excited lady. "Where are the diamonds now?"

"The diamonds, as you call them, and which I don't believe are diamonds, since Mr. Ahrens says they're not, and I'm sure he ought to know, are in this case."

The Countess of Grinstead produced from her muff one of those flat leather cases in which jewellers love to enshrine their wares.

Mr. Golden held out his hand for it.

"Permit me for one moment, Countess."

The Countess handed him the case. Mr. Golden opened it. Mr. Ruby, leaning back in his chair, watched his partner examine the contents. The Countess watched him too. Mr. Golden took out one glittering ornament after another. Through a little microscope he peered into its inmost depths. He turned it over and over, and peered and peered, as though he would read its very heart. When he had concluded his examination he turned to the lady.

"How came you to submit these ornaments to Mr. Ahrens?"

"I don't mind telling you. Not in the least! I happened to want some money. I didn't care to ask the Earl for it. I thought of those things—you had charged me £800 for them, so I thought that he would let me have £200 upon them as a loan. When he told me that they were nothing but rubbish I thought I should have had a fit."

"Where have they been in the interval between your purchasing them from us and your taking them to Mr. Ahrens?"

"Where have they been? Where do you suppose they've been? They have been in my jewel case, of course."

Mr. Golden replaced the ornaments in their satin beds. He closed the case.

"Every inquiry shall be made into the matter, Countess, you may rest assured of that. We cannot afford to lose our money, any more than you can afford to lose your diamonds."

Directly the lady's back was turned Mr. Ruby put a question to his partner. "Well, are they false?"

"They are. It is a good imitation, one of the best imitations I remember to have seen. Still it is an imitation."

"Do you—do you think she did it?"

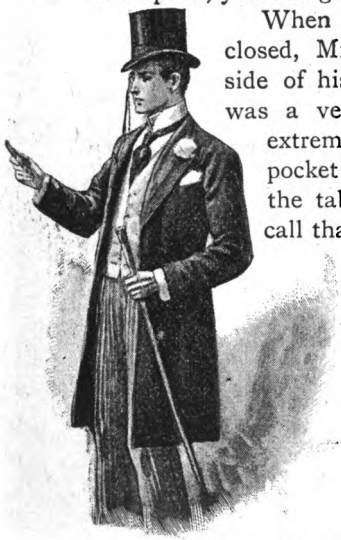
"That is more than I can say. Still, when a lady buys diamonds on Saturday, upon credit, and takes them to a pawnbroker on Tuesday, to raise money on them, one may be excused for having one's suspicions."

While the partners were still discussing the matter, the door was opened by an assistant. "Mr. Gray wishes to see Mr. Ruby."

Before Mr. Ruby had an opportunity of saying whether or not he wished to see Mr. Gray, rather unceremoniously Mr. Gray himself came in.

"I should think I do want to see Mr. Ruby, and while I'm about it, I may as well see Mr. Golden too." Mr. Gray turned to the assistant, who still was standing at the open door. "You can go."

The assistant looked at Mr. Ruby for instructions. "Yes, Thompson, you can go."



"I TELL YOU WHAT I CALL IT."

When Thompson was gone, and the door was closed, Mr. Gray, who wore his hat slightly on the side of his head, turned and faced the partners. He was a very young man, and was dressed in the extreme of fashion. Taking from his coat tail pocket the familiar leather case, he flung it on to the table with a bang. "I don't know what you call that, but I tell you what I call it. I call it a damned swindle."

Mr. Ruby was shocked.

"Mr. Gray! May I ask of what you are complaining?"

"Complaining! I'm complaining of your selling me a thing for two thousand pounds which is not worth two thousand pence!"

"Indeed? Have we been guilty of such conduct as that?" Mr. Golden picked up the case which Mr. Gray had flung down upon the table. "Is this the diamond necklace which we had the pleasure of selling you the other day?"

Mr. Golden opened the case. He took out the necklace which it contained. He examined it as minutely as he had examined the Countess of Grinstead's ornaments. "This is—very remarkable."

"Remarkable! I should think it is remarkable! I bought that necklace for a lady. As some ladies have a way of doing, she had it valued. When she found that the thing was trumpery, she, of course, jumped to the conclusion that I'd been having her—trying to gain kudos for giving her something worth having

at the cheapest possible rate. A pretty state of things, upon my word!"

"This appears to be a lady of acute commercial instincts, Mr. Gray."

"Never mind about that! If you deny that that is the necklace which you sold to me I will prove that it is—in the police court. I am quite prepared for it. Men who are capable of selling a necklace of glass beads as a necklace of diamonds are capable of denying that they ever sold the thing at all."

"Mr. Gray, there is no necessity to use such language to us. If a wrong has been done we are ready and willing to repair it."

"Then repair it!"

It took some time to get rid of Mr. Gray. He had a great deal to say, and a very strong and idiomatic way of saying it. Altogether it was a bad quarter of an hour for Messrs. Ruby and Golden. When, at last, they did get rid of him, Mr. Ruby turned to his partner.

"A PRETTY STATE OF THINGS."

"Golden, it's not possible that the stones in that necklace are false. Those are the stones which we got from Fungst—you remember?"

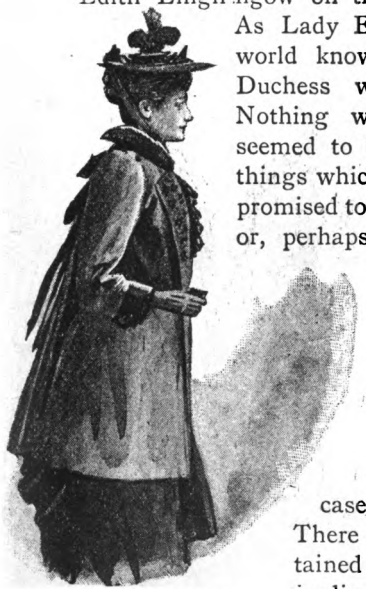
"I remember very well indeed. *They were* the stones which we got from Fungst. They are not now. The gems which are at present in this necklace are paste, covered with a thin veneer of real stones. It is an old trick, but I never saw it better done. The workmanship, both in Mr. Gray's necklace and in the Countess of Grinstead's ornaments, is, in its way, perfection."

While Mr. Ruby was still staring at his partner, the door opened and again Mr. Thompson entered. "The Duchess of Datchet."

"Let's hope," muttered Mr. Golden, "that she's not come to charge us with selling any more paste diamonds."

But the Duchess had come to do nothing of the kind. She had come on a much more agreeable errand, from Messrs. Ruby and Golden's point of view—she had come to buy. As it was Mr. Ruby's special *rôle* to act as salesman to the great—the very great—ladies who patronised that famed establishment, Mr. Golden left his partner to perform his duties.

Mr. Ruby found the Duchess, on that occasion, difficult to please. She wanted something in diamonds, to present to Lady Edith Linglithgow on the occasion of her approaching marriage. As Lady Edith is the Duke's first cousin, as all the world knows, almost, as it were, his sister, the Duchess wanted something very good indeed. Nothing which Messrs. Ruby and Golden had seemed to be quite good enough, except one or two things which were, perhaps, too good. The Duchess promised to return with the Duke himself to-morrow, or, perhaps, the day after. With that promise Mr. Ruby was forced to be content.



"THE DUCHESS OF DATCHET."

The instant the difficult very great lady had vanished, Mr. Golden came into the room. He placed upon the table some leather cases.

"Ruby, what do you think of those?"

"Why, they're from stock, aren't they?" Mr. Ruby took up some of the cases which Mr. Golden had put down. There was quite a heap of them. They contained rings, bracelets, necklaces, odds and ends in diamond work. "Anything the matter with them, Golden?"

"There's this the matter with them—that they're all paste."

"Golden!"

"I've been glancing through the stock. I haven't got far, but I've come upon those already. Somebody appears to be having a little joke at our expense. It strikes me, Ruby, that we're about to be the victims of one of the greatest jewel robberies upon record."

"Golden!"

"Have you been showing this to the Duchess?" Mr. Golden picked up a necklace of diamonds from a case which lay open on the table, whose charms Mr. Ruby had been recently exhibiting to that difficult great lady. "Ruby!—Good Heavens!"

"Wha-what's the matter?"

"They're paste!"

Mr. Golden was staring at the necklace as though it were some hideous thing.

"Paste!—G-G-Golden!" Mr. Ruby positively trembled. "That's Kesteeven's necklace which he brought in this morning to see if we could find a customer for it."

"THEY'RE PASTE!"

"I'm quite aware that this was Kesteeven's necklace. Now it would be dear at a ten-pound note."

"A ten-pound note! He wants ten thousand guineas! It's not more than an hour since he brought it—no one can have touched it."

"Ruby, don't talk nonsense! I saw Kesteeven's necklace when he brought it, I see this thing now. This is not Kesteeven's necklace—it has been changed!"

"Golden!"

"To whom have you shown this necklace?"

"To the Duchess of Datchet."

"To whom else?"

"To no one."

"Who has been in this room?"

"You know who has been in the room as well as I do."

"Then—she did it."

"She?—Who?"

"The Duchess!"

"Golden! You are mad!"

"I shall be mad pretty soon. We shall be ruined! I've not the slightest doubt but that you've been selling people paste for diamonds for goodness knows how long."

"Golden!"

"You'll have to come with me to Datchet House. I'll see the Duke—I'll have it out with him at once." Mr. Golden threw open the door. "Thompson, Mr. Ruby and I are going out. See that nobody comes near this room till we return."

To make sure that nobody did come near that room Mr. Golden turned the key in the lock, and pocketed the key.

(To be continued.)

Obvious!

By J. F. Sullivan.

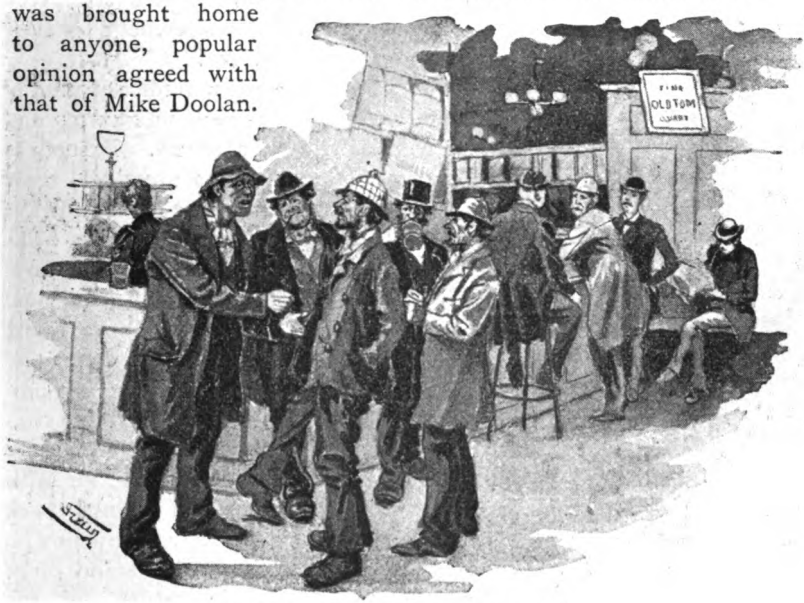
Young Housekeeper: "There, cook! I declare they carry adulteration to such a pitch that they actually manufacture kidneys now! The butcher told me that he had killed fifty sheep this week, and then he afterwards let slip that he had supplied one hundred kidneys—so where did the extra fifty kidneys come from?"

From Information Received.

By Archie Armstrong.

Illustrations by J. Greig.

THE Slumborough Road mystery was a murder. A cruel murder perpetrated for the sake of gain upon a defenceless old man. And no one was louder in denouncing it at the bar of the Buffalo's Head than Michael Doolan, of 8, Slumborough Villas, who lived within a few yards of the spot where old Mr. Isaacs met his death; Mike Doolan declared that the police knew nothing, and never did, or would, know anything; and as the one man arrested on suspicion was released, and the crime never was brought home to anyone, popular opinion agreed with that of Mike Doolan.

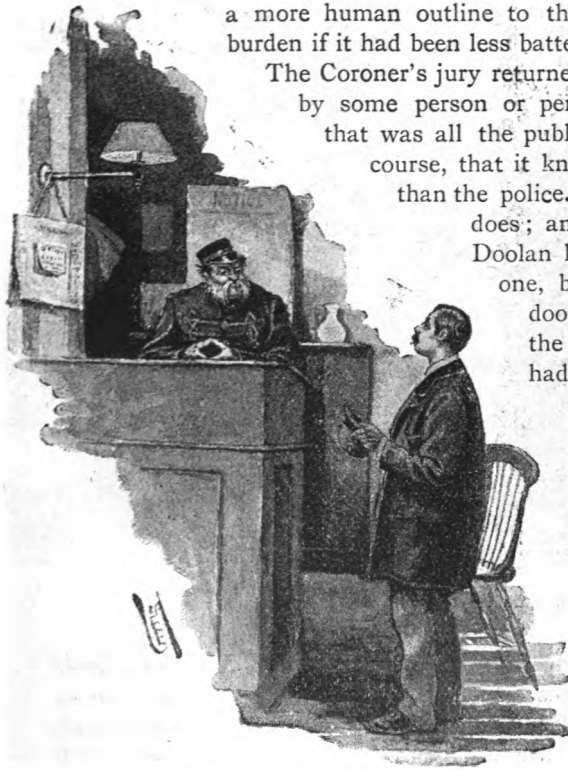


"NO ONE WAS LOUDER IN DENOUNCING IT."

Any stick is good enough to beat a dog with, and the murder of old Solomon Isaacs was used as a text for many a sermon on police incompetence far beyond the district in which Slumborough Villas are situated. Slumborough Villas consist of nine small rickety houses in the North-east postal district of London, hardly

bigger than cottages, and tenanted by artisans and their families. Old Solomon Isaacs owned them, and he must have gone into No. 9, which was unoccupied, after collecting the rents of his other numerous tenements. He used to visit the Villas last, he had often been heard to say so.

It was a very wet afternoon, and he had told someone that he wondered how No. 9 was standing the weather. He was a nice old gentleman, but an economical one. He had built the villas out of a job lot of bricks, and the wise landlord knows his own villa. No one could be found who actually saw him enter No. 9; but it must have been close on tea-time when he did so, which would account for the usual children and women not being about, and, besides, the evening was dark, with rain falling in sheets. All Slumborough Road saw him leave it, an excrescence under an old piece of tarpaulin on a police stretcher. His head would have given a more human outline to the stretcher's ghastly burden if it had been less battered.



"ANYTHING TO REPORT?"

The Coroner's jury returned a verdict of murder by some person or persons unknown; and that was all the public knew. Except, of course, that it knew a great deal more than the police. The public always does; and the friends of Mike Doolan knew more than anyone, because he lived next door to the house where the deed was done, and had many theories to propound over an extraordinary number of half-pints; for Mike stood drinks back freely to anyone who would stand him in return for his theories.

"Anything to report?" said the Divisional Superintendent of the Y.Z. Division to Detective Wagstaffe.

The young detective looked big with information, and he let it out with a rush.

"I've got the man who killed Isaacs—Mike Doolan.'

"I thought so," said the Divisional Superintendent.

It was a way he had. No surmise, however wild, was ever propounded by a subordinate which the Divisional Superintendent had not already weighed in his mind, and said nothing about it.

"Any evidence?"

"His wife says," began young Wagstaffe (he was young, sanguine, and energetic, but he looked uneasy as his chief's eyebrows rose at the word "wife")—"his wife says that on the evening of the murder, at about nine, which was very late for him, he came in and cleaned his own boots; he gave her his trousers and shirt to wash before he went to bed, and stood over her while she did it; they were stained with blood, and made the water red; he said it was red paint."

"HE SAW HER TAKE IT OUT."

"Did she see any money?"

"There was a handful of gold and silver in the pocket of his waistcoat. He saw her take it out, told her to put it back, and said it belonged to his club; he said he would thrash her if she pried about. He often does thrash her; she is afraid of him, and has told no one but me."

"Was he home at tea-time?"

"No; he has never been out before at that time for weeks, but she thought she saw him come in to the back premises about five o'clock."

"Has she ever seen the money again?"

"No, sir; but he has been very flush lately. I can get her evidence corroborated there."

"Her hevidence," said the Divisional Superintendent (he always got loose in his h's when he tried to make an impressive speech; his short, terse questions and answers were those of a superior man, which he was)—"her hevidence ain't worth a

twopenny cuss; the hevidence of a wife ain't hevidence at all. Even a barrister knows as much law as that when he first passes his examinations, and an officer must know more criminal law than hany haverage counsel."

Detective Wagstaffe looked crestfallen; he had had his misgivings, but his excitement had made him neglect them. "I suppose she *is* his wife?" he said, dubiously.

"Ah!" said the Divisional Superintendent; "now, Detective Wagstaffe, you talk as sensibly as a member of Parliament. If she has lived these ten years without being his wife, she can hang him, if she likes, and I dare say she'll be glad to. Find out, my lad, find out. I'll let Jones and Smithson know, and they'll help you work up the clue."

Detective Wagstaffe did not look pleased at being promised assistance, and made no more reports for a week. When he next did so, he laid the blackened head of a coal-hammer on the Divisional Superintendent's table and said, "That's the weapon that did it."

"Did what?" said his chief, hardly looking up.

"Did Mr. Isaacs; it's Mike Doolan's. I found it hid right away behind the dust-bin at Number 9, and it's had the handle burnt out of it."

"Who identifies?"

"No one but the wife, sir, and the man who sold it, and he says he sells dozens in a year."

"How about the wife?"

"He's done us there," said the Detective sullenly. "He went to the parson, two days after the murder, and told him as how he'd been 'living in sin,' and such like, and how he'd not like the neighbours to know it, and the parson, he said, he'd advance the money for a licence, so they needn't have any banns, and they all kept it dark, and he's paid the parson back, and—they've done us there. Done us a week ago, and the wife's as pleased as Punch to be an honest woman, though she is frightened out of her life of him."

The two policemen looked at one another and shrugged their shoulders. Next day Detective Wagstaffe came again.

"I've seen Mrs. Woodgate, what used to live at Number 7, Slumborough Villas, sir," he said. "I've got her outside. She's something to say, sir; she won't tell me what. May I bring her in?"

The Divisional Superintendent nodded. An untidy-looking

woman entered, held out her hand inquiringly, and, being told she was not going to be sworn for the present, began quickly:

"I was agoing to have tea, gentlemen, on the evening of Wednesday, five weeks agone, gentlemen, with Mrs. Robinson, which lives at No. 6, next door to my old home. I see'd Mr. Isaacs acoming out of the door as I goes in. 'Good evening, sir,' says I. 'Why,' says he, 'good evening, Mrs.——'"

"Cut that," said the Divisional Superintendent. "What did he say to do with the case?"

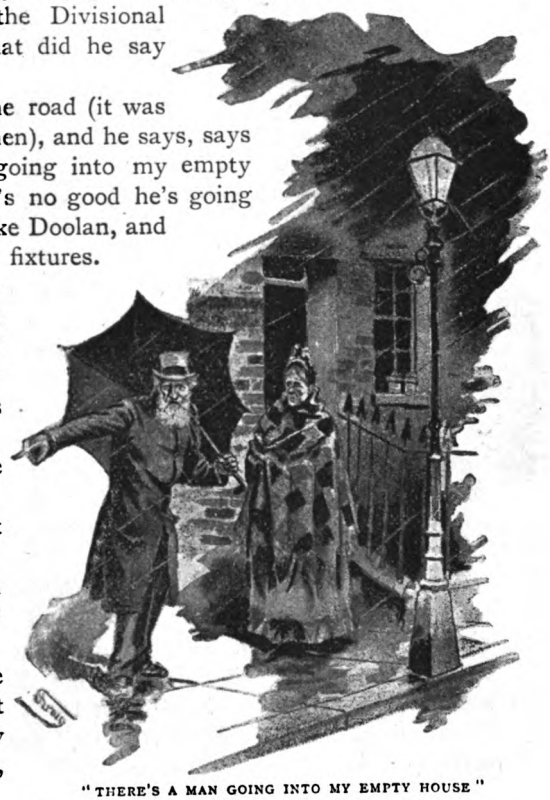
"He looks along the road (it was a getting dark, gentlemen), and he says, says he, 'There's a man going into my empty house at No. 9, and it's no good he's going for. It's that thief Mike Doolan, and he's going after my fixtures. He's stealing my woodwork to burn it at home,' he says. 'I'll be even with the thief,' he says, and off he goes down the road."

"Did you see Mike Doolan?"

"No, gentlemen, it were that dark——"

"Why didn't you tell someone before?" said the Detective.

"When I heard the news I was took that bad I could hardly get home, gentlemen, and——"



"THERE'S A MAN GOING INTO MY EMPTY HOUSE"

Mrs. Woodgate was bundled sobbing out of the office of the Divisional Superintendent, and into the Slumborough Road again.

"Come in, Smithson," said the Divisional Superintendent, as an alert-looking dark man entered.

Detective Wagstaffe looked as jealous as a jolly red-faced young Englishman can look.

"Well?"

"Well, sir, there's only one man knows anything about this

Isaacs' case, and he says Mike Doolan asked him what he thought of collecting Mr. Isaacs's rents for him."

"TRIED TO TEMPT HIM."

"Eh?"

"Tried to tempt him to commit the crime as an accomplice, sir. Offered him half the swag, and he refused; and he saw Doolan that evening coming out of Number 9 half-an-hour before the body was found, and Doolan gave him ten shillings to tell no one he'd seen him."

"Why the deuce does he say so *now?*" said the Superintendent.

"Been drunk on the money, sir, and then got locked up for assault?"

"He'll make a nice witness," said the Divisional Superintendent. "Who is he?"

"Skinny Dick, sir. Beg pardon, sir, Skindlebury Dickenson is the name he gives at the court, sir."

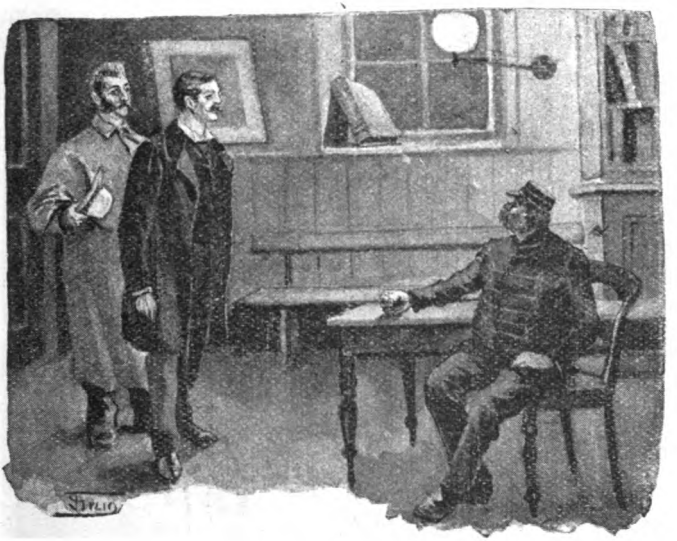
But the Divisional Superintendent did not notice the apology.

"Skinny Dick," he said, "had fourteen days, and so had Doolan, for fighting in Slumborough Road six months back. Skinny Dick swore then he'd do for Doolan when he came out."

"I think he's telling truth, sir," put in Smithson, disconsolately.

"Aye, but who'd believe the likes of him if he was," said his chief, angrily. "The man's had seven years' P.S. for burglary, and been locked up times without mind besides. Skinny Dick!" The Divisional Superintendent brought his mighty fist down on the table in front of him; and from the total omission of the H in the next word he uttered, they knew they were in for an oration. "'Ang Skinny Dick! The case stands thus: Mike Doolan came in all over blood on the evening of the murder, and his coal-hammer was found behind the dust-bin when the murder was

committed, and he had heaps more money than he should have that very night. His wife says that, and she can't be a witness.



"'ANG SKINNY DICK!'"

It's not hevidence; it's hinformation received. He waited to murder the old man, and he bribed a man not to tell who'd seen him come out of the house. That's evidence of a sort, but it's not enough to hang him in a good man's mouth, and in the mouth of a drunken old convict, who's quarrelled times and again with Doolan, and been heard to threaten him—why, blest if it's any more than hinformation received, too; the judge wouldn't let a jury convict on it, even if they wanted to. No, boys, Mike Doolan did it, and we know he did it, as sure as we know Asquith is 'Ome Sec., but we only know it from 'hinformation received,' and we shall get no forarder—we've no chance of doing so, and Michael Doolan may go where he likes and when he likes, and do as he likes, as safe and 'appy in Slumborough Road, N.E., as if he were Pope of Rome."

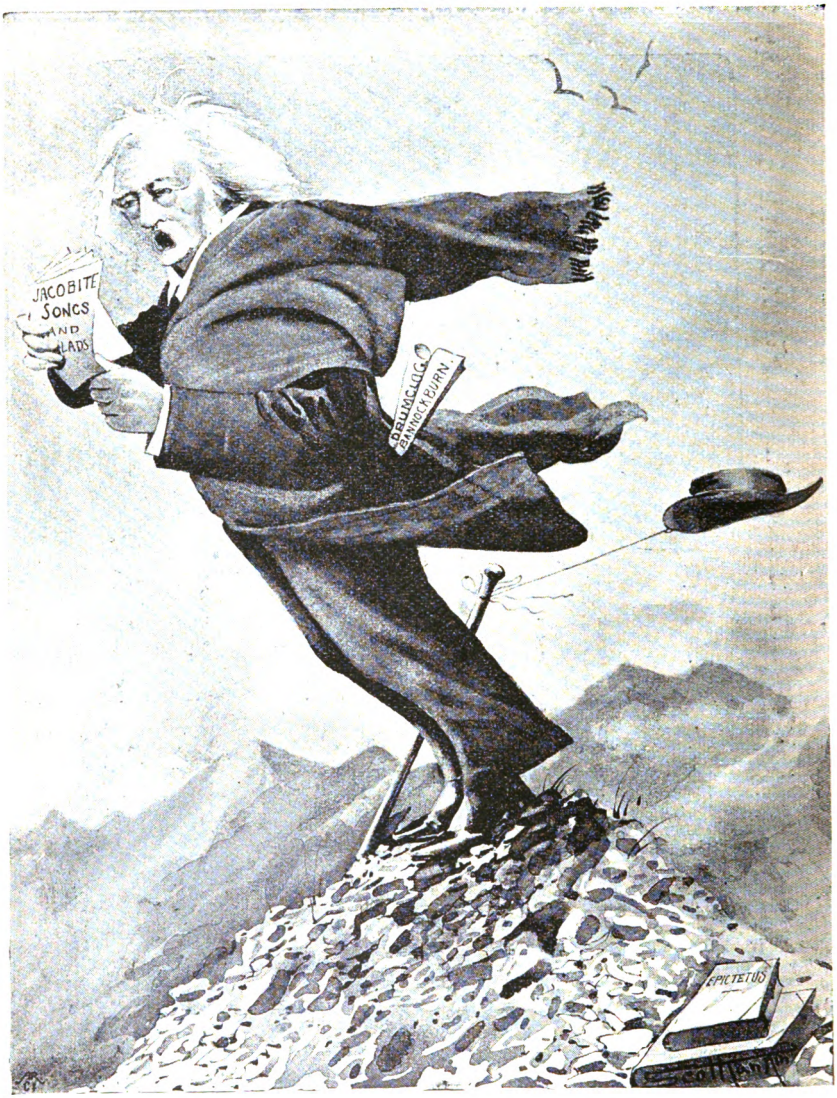
"SAFE AND 'APPY."

And so Mike Doolan does.

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

PROFESSOR BLACKIE.



"Sitting is a slovenly habit and ought not to be indulged. When reading fine passages of poetry . . . . read as much as possible aloud . . . . which will have the double good effect of strengthening that most important vital element, the lungs. . . . . In an age when the whole world is more or less locomotive the student who stays at home must make up his mind to be looked on by all well-conditioned persons as a weakling and an oddity. I can read as well on the top of Ben Cruachan as in a fusty study."—Professor Blackie.

G. R. Sims gets to the root of games.

The word "game" comes down to us, I believe, from the Anglo-Saxon "gamen," which, being interpreted, means joy or pleasure; but there are several games which are played in these modern days in which it is difficult to discover where the joy or pleasure come in. Cricket is a game, and football is a game. My cricket experiences were perhaps unfortunate. The first ball that was ever bowled at me I managed to hit in such a gentle manner that it ran up my bat, and left my face very much in the condition of the one belonging to the gentleman who tried to teach French at Killaloe. From the football field I retired, after being one of the side with which victory rested at the close. In the intervals of surgical attendance I vainly endeavoured to remember the remark of a well-known historical character, who said something about "Another such victory and ——." There my memory halted, which was probably due to the fact that there was a block of ice upon my head.' But cricket and football are perhaps more properly described as sports than games, and we know that sport in the land of beef and beer is always associated with physical discomfort to somebody or something.

He describes "morra."

Climate and food have a great deal to do with national games. The Italians find "joy and pleasure" in a game which is known as "morra." It was played by the Egyptians two thousand years before the Christian era, and the legions of Cæsar beguiled their spare time with it. It is the favourite amusement of the Romans, and the waiters of the Messrs. Gatti spend their off hours in wet weather madly shouting, "Tre! Cinque! Otto! Tutti!" and flashing their fingers in the air. This is how morra is played. Two persons sit opposite each other. Both simultaneously throw out their hands with a certain number of fingers extended, and each has to call out at the same moment the number of fingers he guesses are extended by himself and his adversary together. The one who guesses correctly wins a point. Five points generally make the game, and the winner pockets the baiocchi staked. In Southern Italy, the game of morra occasionally leads to playful passes with knives and daggers, and a dispute as to the number of fingers a player really held out has been known to occasion a vacancy in somebody's family circle. It once led to a vendetta which lasted a hundred years, and, commencing with a murder in Naples, ended with the assassination of an entire family in Texas, and the lynching of the sole survivor on the other side of the quarrel by a local mob who did not understand the niceties of the game. That it is a game which may lead to disputes the ancient Romans fully recognised. They would say of a man whose honesty was unimpeachable, "*Dignus est quicum in tenebris mices.*" So trustworthy that one may play morra with him in the dark.

* * * *

Also spolican.

The English have the genius of the indoor game about as largely developed as that of the outdoor game, but the indoor game is as remarkable for its mildness as the outdoor game is for its ferocity. It is wonderful how fascinating even the most violent natures find some of the simplest forms of indoor amusement. I have seen a lady whose husband, a military man covered with medals, trembled at the very sound of her voice, spend an entire day playing at a game called Smithson's Enamel, and painting chairs, tables, hot-water cans, and baths a bright scarlet, which compelled her husband to take to blue glasses for the remainder of his lease. Some years ago, at Broadmoor, I formed one of a happy band of murderers (I was not a murderer, but a visitor) who

killed a weary winter afternoon picking up one bit of stick with two bits of stick. This game I afterwards ascertained was called spelican, and is exceedingly popular among the families of the rural clergy. But by far and away the most delightful indoor game, especially for a large party which does not contain a poet, is the game known as bouts rimés. One sober citizen in search of joy and pleasure writes—

I wandered by the river's marge,
And brooded on the past,

and passes it on to the mother of a family, who adds—

Because I'd bought a hat so large,
No pin would make it fast.

And the guests separate shortly afterwards, declaring that they have never spent a more pleasant and intellectual evening in their lives.

* * * *

And others.

There is another excellent indoor game, in which some fifty thousand families devote their spare time to guessing the balance at the Bank of England on the 31st of December, the state of the weather on the third Sunday before Lent in the following year but one, or the number of deaths from zymotic diseases which will figure in the Registrar-General's return for the week which includes the next August Bank Holiday. This game usually ends in a freehold villa, the police court, the Court of Chancery, two pounds a week for life, or a useless expenditure of time and postage stamps; but it has temporarily thrust the old-fashioned game of the two guinea double acrostic prize, divided among sixteen, completely into the shade. Children's games of late years have undergone such a complete change that no one who is not constantly in the nursery is competent to write about them. Some years ago little boys and girls were quite happy if they could break a window, swallow a marble, blow soap bubbles, or put their fingers in each other's eyes; now they amuse themselves by contributing articles to the "Children's Columns" of the weekly Press, and receive bound volumes of high-class literature for poems on their domestic circumstances, or essays on the relative attractions of the British maiden and the American girl. The "fun" of this game is quite as much appreciated by the grown-up people as by the children, especially when the prize article on "At what age ought girls to begin to think of marriage?" is signed "Hypatia Smith (aged 11½)." Starting these competitions is the favourite "game" of a very large number of newspaper proprietors.

Alden speaks of games.

The word "games" "surprises by himself" (see "Pickwick") a large variety of things. There are irreverent people who speak of whist as a game, though in reality it is, or ought to be, a career. Also golf is called a game by those who make a jest of all things solemn and sacred; and we sometimes hear some great statesman's most important measure described as "his little game." But I assume that when *The Idler* mentions "games" it refers to those curious manifestations of mental disease which are often observed in the drawing-rooms of country houses and suburban villas. The medical men have various names for these manifestations, such as "Cross Questions," "Blindman's Buff," "Charades," and so forth, but there is not the slightest doubt that they are all so many forms of the same disease, and are the work of the same devastating microbe. The disease in question seems to be indigenous to the country, for it seldom attacks the residents of closely-built and densely-inhabited districts. The more lonely the situation of a house, the more frequently its inhabitants are attacked by "games." This goes to show that the microbe which causes the disease is bred in the earth, like the microbe of malarial fever. Indeed, one eminent physician has maintained that the same microbe is responsible for both diseases, and points out that a house, or a suburban row of villas situated in a swampy district, is almost certain to be devastated by both "games" and fever.

* * * *

He theorises.

The first symptom which a person attacked by "games" develops is a marked weakening of the mental powers, which is doubtless due to a temporary anæmic condition of the brain. In this condition he or she submits without a murmur to be blindfolded, and then proceeds to grope in the dark for young persons of the other sex. The extreme mental weakness of the sufferer is shown by the fact that very often he cannot distinguish his maiden aunt from the prettiest girl in the room, even by the sense of touch. In other forms of the disease this mental weakness is shown by the utterly idiotic answers which the sufferer makes to questions put to him. Anything more melancholy than the condition of the man who manifests these "Cross Question" symptoms, as they are commonly called, cannot be imagined. Less melancholy, though perhaps more revolting, are the distinctly maniacal symptoms technically known as "Dumb Crambo." Our lunatic asylums can show

nothing to be compared with "Dumb Crambo," and there is not a professional lunatic in the kingdom who would not turn from "Dumb Crambo" with loathing and indignation. When the disease manifests itself in "Charades" it is perhaps more tedious, but less painful. Indeed, there are girls who, when suffering from "Charades," contrive to exhibit cheerfulness, resignation, and ankles, to a degree which excites our admiration. Still, for all this, "Charades" are recognised by the medical profession as one of the most dangerous forms of the disease, inasmuch as they are often followed by a long train of *sequelæ*, such as affections of the heart, lesions of trailing skirts, and premature shedding of hairpins, which completely baffle medical science. The worst feature of the disease is the rapidity with which it spreads. It often happens that in twenty minutes from the time it breaks out in a drawing-room it has attacked every person present. Youth and age alike fall victims to it, and in a recent epidemic which occurred in a Continental watering place a bishop was so violently attacked that he was observed, while his eyes were bandaged, to clasp a governess—who, by the way, was young and pretty—under the delusion that she was his wife. It is needless to speak of the terrible mental depression which the sufferer undergoes when the attack passes off, and he realises what he has been doing while under its influence. There is, of course, a complete loss of self-respect, and in most instances a distinct temptation to suicide. Time and tonics generally bring about a cure, but the man who has once suffered from "Dumb Crambo" or "Charades" is always liable to a relapse.

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And prescribes remedies.

There are two remedies for "games" which are prescribed by the intelligent practitioner. One of these is merely a temporary palliative, while the other is an unfailing cure. The first remedy alluded to consists in causing the patient to revolve rapidly upon his or her axis. This sends the blood to the anæmic brain, and if the rotary motion is kept up the attack of "games" passes off for the time. The other remedy is the only scientific one, for it strikes at the root of the disease. It is hardly necessary to mention that tobacco is particularly disliked by microbes of all sorts, and has a rapidly fatal effect upon several of our leading bacilli. Among the latter is the bacillus which produces "games." In the presence of tobacco-smoke it withers and dies, and in whatever drawing-room tobacco is smoked, there the

microbe refuses to enter. "Games" never break out in clubs where men smoke, or, in fact, in any houses where cigars are permitted in the drawing-room. Similarly, "games" are unknown in houses where dancing is the usual form of evening amusement. It was the observation of these facts which led Professor Koch to make his great discovery that rotary motion temporarily cures "games" by sending the blood to the head; and that tobacco is an unfailing germicide in the case of the bacillus of "games." There will be no "Blindman's Buff," no "Cross Questions," no "Dumb Crambo," or other painful and unhealthy manifestations, in households where dancing follows as soon as two young persons of opposite sexes assemble themselves together. Where a drawing-room is properly fumigated the inmates are absolutely safe against any attack of the disease, and if you are really desirous to keep your house from infection, it is well to insist that every one who enters it shall either smoke a cigar, or at least a cigarette, or shall submit to be thoroughly fumigated in the outer hall. There is one mystery about "games" which science has not yet been able to explain. This is why it attacks the extreme Low Church household in preference to any other. The fact is undoubted, but whether it is due to the rarity of dancing in Low Church households is by no means clear. That a disease should attack persons of one particular religious belief rather than those of another, is as common as it is inexplicable. For instance, in the city of Montreal, Roman Catholics constantly die of diphtheria, although the disease hardly ever attacks a Montreal Protestant. However, I need not discuss this branch of the subject. I have pointed out the cause and cure of "games," and, in so doing, trust that I have been of some little benefit to my fellow-man.

* * * *

Burgin tells of an Armenian game.

One isn't always prepared to play games at a moment's notice, but the most unexpected one in which I ever took part was at an Armenian wedding in the heart of Asia Minor. I didn't know anything about it then, or nothing would have induced me to set foot in Asia Minor. It is called "dancing down" in English—in Armenian for it is unpronounceable—and is played in somewhat strenuous wise.

* * * *

Called "dancing down."

We had been travelling all day through the snow—on mules—vainly trying to keep warm, or beguiling the cheerless hours with that sad apology for music dear to the Turkish soldier, and which resembles nothing earthly so much as the howlings of a wounded hyena. Weary and worn with woe, we at length arrived at the town of Mardin. After eating to repletion—we had touched nothing save

a handful of raisins since daybreak—we stretched ourselves on divans, and prepared to smoke the cigarette of consolation; all of us, that is, save one man who had forgotten to take his spurs off, and found that they "clinched" when he attempted to repose *à la Turque*. At this juncture arrived an invitation to a wedding-feast from the most influential man in the place. My chief declined it, but suggested that I should represent him at the festivities. We reluctantly turned out (four Turkish staff officers and myself) into the snow, and hied us to the wedding, where we found that we were expected to eat a second dinner. The Turkish officers didn't seem to mind; but I had to sit there, round a cartwheel sort of table on the floor, and pretend to eat from all the different dishes. We washed our hands first, and then the man on my right plunged his fingers into a dish of mutton, and dropped shreds of it into my hair as he leant back to eat, whilst the one on my left scattered grains of *pilaff* down my back, and the head man opposite rolled up a ball of something else and came round to affectionately pop it into my mouth. It was a very sad meal for me, but at length the dinner was taken away, and our host invited us to come into the yard for the "dancing down."

* * * *

And explains how it is played.

The snow had been swept away in the courtyard and about ten yards apart were two great blazing fires. Round one fire the bridesmaids, covered with jewels and gold coins, and carrying the bride's trousseau on their heads, danced vigorously, whilst at the other fire the bridegroom's male friends disported themselves in a similar manner. From the flat roofs of the houses the old lady friends of both parties looked down and cheered vigorously, as a girl advanced from one fire and a man from the other. They did a very quick kind of hornpipe step, and kept on until either the man or the girl gave way. The partisans on each side sent forth wild shouts as every contest terminated, and the bridegroom's party ultimately got the best of it. Suddenly the bride's mother, a tall, tough-looking woman, floated down from the roof of a house, danced into the arena, and symbolically dared us to "come on." The men rushed at us, and pulled old Tahir Bey (a fat colonel) into the arena. He held out for eight minutes, and deserved to be mentioned in despatches. Turkish officers numbers two, three, and four lasted respectively one, three, and two minutes, and still the old lady danced on, her arms akimbo, sending forth deafening yells at me as I reclined on a cushion. "Get up," shouted Tahir, mopping his forehead. "In Allah's name dance her down to —— a very warm place." But I didn't want to get up, for I felt as sleepy as a bear in winter quarters. The next moment the bridegroom's friends rushed at me *en masse*, pulled me to my feet, and set me going

like a teetotum as the eccentric old female gyrated rapidly round me, indulging, owing to the excitement of the moment, in remarks which I was afterwards told reflected on my ancestry for four or five generations back. Then I subsided, a limp, amorphous mass, and the old lady stood over me and sang a song of triumph something like this :—"I am a gazelle of fifteen summers." Fifty would have been nearer the truth. (Chorus from the girls—"She is a gazelle of fifteen summers.") "I have danced down big men and little men." (Chorus—"She has danced down big men and little men.") "And they have melted away from before me as snow in the running brook." I got up and admitted this was quite true, and we left the "gazelle of fifteen summers" still dancing. Try this game in an old English hall at Christmas, and you'll find it better than "Sir Roger de Coverley," but don't eat two dinners before you begin.

* * * *

Barry Pain on hop-scotch.

Some of the games of children are so easy that even adults can share them. Grown-up people, for instance, have their little cricket and football imitated from the children. We cannot, armed with a pistol that has a strong spring to it, and hurts at five yards, pursue a small boy who, on the strength of an adornment derived from the interior of a cracker and a serviceable imagination, asserts that he is a bison; but we do our best with deer-forests and other substitutes to catch the spirit of the thing. Yet childhood has some games which are as closed books to the adult. 'Enerietter, aged eleven, with her gown that was never meant for her, and her untamed London manner, chalks mysterious lines on the pavement, under the wall of the Board School. Then Margrit comes along, and 'Enerietter and Margrit play for hours, the chalked lines being a part of the apparatus, and a small pebble the other part. It is mysterious, not understood of adults, but it is called hop-scotch, and is said by children to be a joy. Probably no one over the age of eighteen knows how to play it, and the adult has nothing to take its place. Where the child has hop-scotch, the adult has an aching void.

* * * *

And other mysteries.

But the indoor games of children are still more wonderful. Either you all sit round the table (in which case you have cards dealt you, but may not look at them), or else all the chairs are placed in a row—in which case you walk about and may not sit down in them. By dint of such pastimes, the child succeeds in whiling away the long winter evenings; at intervals it is necessary for him to yell "Snap!" or "Thumbs up!" or to ask how, when, and where you like it. It is useless for any adult to try to

understand any of these games. It is the essential of all of them that one of the players should become an object of derision and contempt; if an adult joins in the game, it is always he who becomes that object. The adult must either play whist, or take his long winter evenings plain; the mysteries of the nursery games are not easily penetrated.

* * * *

Hatton is discursive.

It depends what you play for, fun or money. In these last days of the century few people play for fun. Everybody is so busy. There is so much serious work to do, and so many "selected hundred" books to read. Utility is the great cry. One has to study even novels now-a-days. It is almost necessary to pass a medical examination before you can read some of them. "Hunt the Slipper" and "Find the Ring" are not bad games if the women are pretty; but if your play means business, both billiards and poker are games that offer many and varied opportunities—firstly, if you are good at the winning hazard and the spot stroke; and secondly, if you can hold "straights" and "flushes" easily, and know how to bluff with discretion. I once played poker with a hundred pounds "ante" and two hundred "raise." When the play finished I had won £100,000—in counters, beans, only beans, but very good ones. If that game had been a serious business I should not have been discussing it with *The Idler* in London; I should have been at my villa in Italy, or on my yacht in the Mediterranean, or entertaining some of you fellows at my shooting box in the Highlands. No, I should not have given up writing, but I should, of course, be practising the art of composition "for art's sake," according to the new law laid down by Mr. Howells and other rich and shining lights of literature. But alas! I only played for beans; not that sovereigns are anything more than so many beans to millionaires. Their money is in paper. They never run their fingers through their heaps of gold and count them as I do when I cash publishers' drafts and gloat over the current coin of the realm. After all, I dare say it is a great bother to be a millionaire. I never knew one whose games were not tedious and expensive, and I have known several. They never jump over chairs and try to balance peacocks' feathers on their noses.

* * * *

But tells good stories.

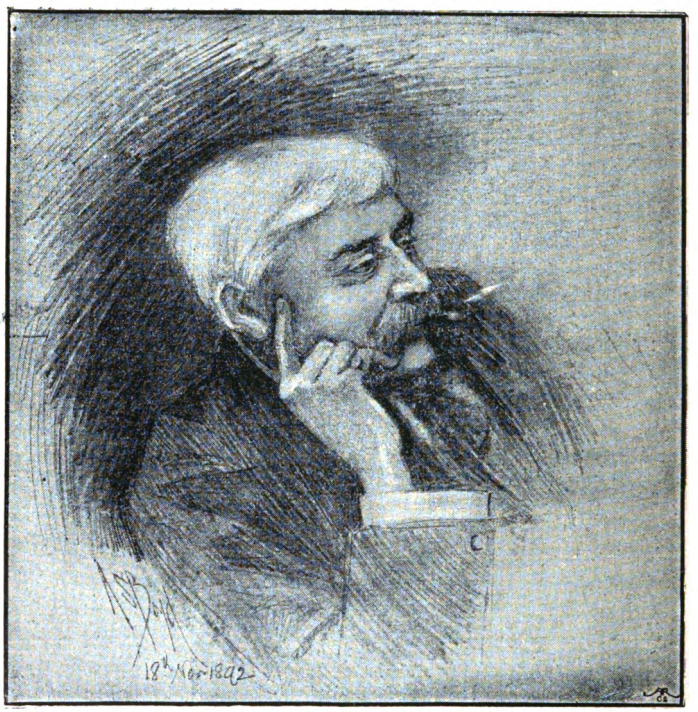
I remember a friend of Douglas Jerrold telling me how he and Dickens and Tom Hood and Leech and Lemon played leapfrog after a game of bowls on Jerrold's lawn, and how draughts was a favourite pastime of Dickens and Jerrold. By the way, do you remember the story of Cardinal Mazarin, who used to shut himself up in a room and jump

over chairs? He would arrange them in varying degrees of difficulty, and end in a kind of solitary steeplechase. One day he forgot to lock the door. A young courtier entered. Equal to the embarrassing situation, he exclaimed, "I'll bet your Eminence two gold pieces I can beat that jump." Says Mr. Thistleton Dyer, who relates the story in his *Great Men at Play*, "He was wise enough to lose his two gold pieces, but before long he gained a mitre." Then there was Dr. Samuel Clarke, who played with his boys at "swimming on a table." One day, on the approach of a pedantic acquaintance, he closed the frolic with the remark, "Boys, be wise, here comes a fool." A favourite indoor pastime of Dugald Stewart, the philosopher, was the balancing of a peacock's feather on his nose. The other night, at a classic music hall in a provincial city, I saw a man balance two feathers on his nose, toss in the air a continuous stream of balls and catch them in a cluster of cups, while he was whirling round a somewhat narrow stage on a bicycle. Patrick Fraser Tytler often competed with Stewart in the peacock's feather business. Bicycles were not in vogue at that time, or the philosopher and the historian might have extended their rivalry to feats on wheels. Faraday, after a game of romps at the Royal Institution, once sallied forth into the street on a velocipede which he had been riding round the theatre. Lord Eldon bought a house in the country that his indoor and outdoor games might not be disturbed by sudden calls to councils and consultations. "You don't know the luxury of playing the fool," he said to a family party, before whom he had indulged in a jump into the drawing-room and a little dance to a tune of his own composing.

* * * *

The best game of all.

What do I think of arm-chair amusements? I know of only one, the other player being a book that never argues with you, or trumps your best card, or undertakes to annihilate you in so many moves. A good book before the finest game at chess the world ever saw played, with men carved by the greatest artist! No, chess is not for "the likes of me" who have to work. I do not boast that in this Lord Bacon was of the same opinion. He considered chess "too wise a game" for fun. Sir Walter Scott knew what work was, and he saw that a man might learn another language with less strain on his mind than comes from chess. Cowper used to play at looking into the fire; perhaps, as has been suggested, he had better have played chess; his madness might then have been less conspicuous. After all, I don't know that one could play a better game than this *Idler* game of gossip.



FRANCIS BRET HARTE.

(A Sketch from Life.) By A. S. Boyd.

My First Book.

By Bret Harte.

Illustrations by A. S. Boyd.

WHEN I say that my "First Book" was *not* my own, and contained beyond the title-page not one word of my own composition, I trust that I will not be accused of trifling with paradox, or tardily unbosoming myself of youthful plagiary. But the fact remains that in priority of publication the first book for which I became responsible, and which probably provoked more criticism than anything I have written since, was a small compilation of Californian poems indited by other hands.

A well-known bookseller of San Francisco one day handed me a collection of certain poems which had already appeared in Pacific Coast magazines and newspapers, with the request that I should, if possible, secure further additions to them, and then make a selection of those which I considered the most notable and characteristic for a single volume to be issued by him. I have reason to believe that this unfortunate man was actuated by a laudable desire to publish a pretty Californian book—*his* first essay in publication—and at the same time to foster Eastern immigration by an exhibit of the Californian literary product, but, looking back upon his venture, I am inclined to think that the little volume never contained anything more poetically pathetic or touchingly imaginative than that gentle conception. Equally simple and trustful was his selection of myself as compiler. It was based somewhat, I think, upon the fact that "the artless Helicon" I boasted "was Youth," but I imagine it was chiefly owing to the circumstance that I had from the outset, with precocious foresight, confided to him my intention of not putting any of my own verses in the volume. Publishers are appreciative; and a self-abnegation so sublime, to say nothing of its security, was not without its effect.

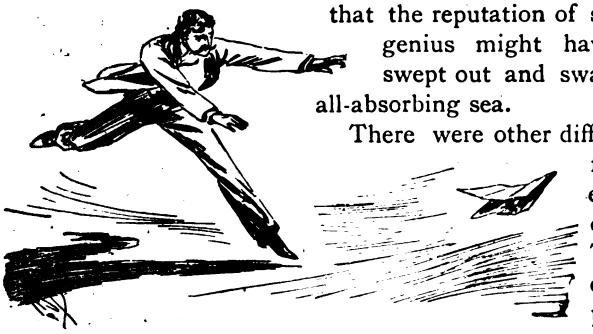
We settled to our work with fatuous self-complacency, and no suspicion of the trouble in store for us, or the storm that was to presently hurtle around our devoted heads. I winnowed the poems, and he exploited a preliminary announcement to an eager and waiting press, and we moved together unwittingly to our doom. I remember to have been early struck with the quantity

of material coming in—evidently the result of some popular misunderstanding of the announcement. I found myself in daily and hourly receipt of sere and yellow fragments, originally torn from some dead and gone newspaper, creased and seamed from long folding in wallet or pocket-book. Need I say that most of them were of an emotional or didactic nature; need I add any criticism of these homely souvenirs, often discoloured by the morning coffee, the evening tobacco, or, Heaven knows! perhaps blotted by too easy tears! Enough that I knew now what had become of those original but never re-copied verses which filled

"WE SETTLED TO OUR WORK."

the "Poet's Corner" of every country newspaper on the coast. I knew now the genesis of every didactic verse that "coldly furnished forth the marriage table" in the announcement of weddings in the rural press. I knew now who had read—and possibly indited—the dreary *hic jacets* of the dead in their mourning columns. I knew now why certain letters of the alphabet had been more tenderly considered than others, and affectionately addressed. I knew the meaning of the "Lines to

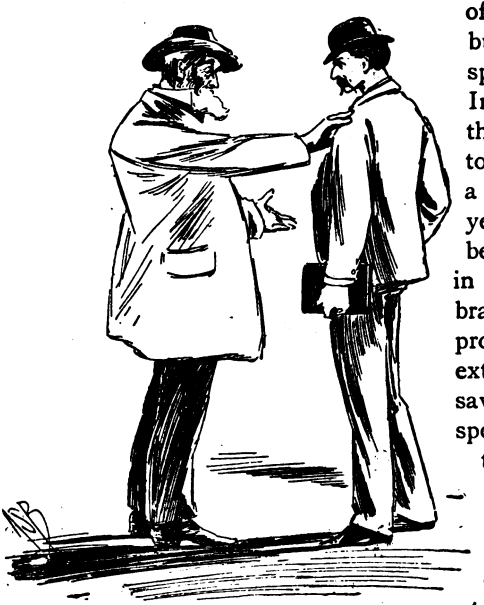
Her who can best understand them," and I knew that they *had* been understood. The morning's post buried my table beneath these withered leaves of posthumous passion. They lay there like the pathetic nosegays of quickly-fading wild flowers, gathered by school children, inconsistently abandoned upon roadsides, or as inconsistently treasured as limp and flabby superstitions in their desks. The chill wind from the Bay blowing in at my window seemed to rustle them into sad articulate appeal. I remember that when one of them was whisked from the window by a stronger gust than usual, and was attaining a circulation it had never known before, I ran a block or two to recover it. I was young then, and in an exalted sense of editorial responsibility which I have since survived, I think I turned pale at the thought that the reputation of some unknown genius might have thus been swept out and swallowed by the all-absorbing sea.



"A CIRCULATION IT HAD NEVER KNOWN BEFORE."

There were other difficulties arising from this unexpected wealth of material. There were dozens of poems on the same subject. "The Golden Gate," "Mount Shasta," "The Yosemite," were especially provocative. A beautiful bird known as the "Californian Canary" appeared to have been shot at and winged by every poet from Portland to San Diego. Lines to the "Mariposa" flower were as thick as the lovely blossoms themselves in the Merced valley, and the Madrone tree was as "berhymed" as Rosalind. Again, by a liberal construction of the publisher's announcement, *manuscript* poems, which had never known print, began to coyly unfold their virgin blossoms in the morning's mail. They were accompanied by a few lines stating, casually, that their sender had found them lying forgotten in his desk, or, mendaciously, that they were "thrown off" on the spur of the moment a few hours before. Some of the names appended to them astonished me. Grave, practical business men, sage financiers, fierce speculators, and plodding traders, never before suspected of poetry, or even correct prose, were among the contributors.

It seemed as if most of the able-bodied inhabitants of the Pacific Coast had been in the habit at some time of expressing themselves in verse. Some sought confidential interviews with the editor. The climax was reached when, in Montgomery Street, one day, I was approached by a well-known and venerable judicial magnate. After some serious preliminary conversation, the old gentleman finally alluded to what he was pleased to call a task of "great delicacy and responsibility" laid upon my "young shoulders." "In fact," he went on paternally, adding the weight of his judicial hand to that burden, "I have thought of speaking to you about it. In my leisure moments on the Bench I have, from time to time, polished and perfected a certain college poem begun years ago, but which may now be said to have been finished in California, and thus embraced in the scope of your proposed selection. If a few extracts, selected by myself, to save you all trouble and responsibility, be of any benefit to you, my dear young friend, consider them at your service."



"'CONSIDER THEM AT YOUR SERVICE.'"

In this fashion the contributions had increased to three times the bulk of the original collection, and the difficulties of selection were augmented in proportion. The editor and publisher eyed each other aghast. "Never thought there were so many of the blamed things alive," said the latter with great simplicity, "had you?" The editor had not. "Couldn't you sort of shake 'em up and condense 'em, you know? keep their ideas—and their names—separate, so that they'd have proper credit. See?" The editor pointed out that this would infringe the rule he had laid down. "I see," said the publisher thoughtfully—"well, couldn't you pare 'em down; give the first verse entire and sorter sample the others?" The editor thought not. There was clearly nothing to do but to make a more rigid selection—a difficult performance

when the material was uniformly on a certain dead level, which it is not necessary to define here. Among the rejections were, of course, the usual plagiarisms from well-known authors imposed upon an inexperienced country press; several admirable pieces detected as acrostics of patent medicines, and certain veiled libels and indecencies such as mark the "first" publications on blank walls and fences of the average youth. Still the bulk remained too large, and the youthful editor set to work reducing it still more with a sympathising concern which the good-natured, but unliterary, publisher failed to understand, and which, alas! proved to be equally unappreciated by the rejected contributors.

The book appeared—a pretty little volume typographically, and externally a credit to pioneer book-making. Copies were liberally supplied to the press, and authors and publisher self-complacently awaited the result. To the latter this should have been satisfactory; the book sold readily from his well-known counters to purchasers who seemed to be drawn by a singular curiosity, unaccompanied, however, by any critical comment. People would lounge into the shop, turn over the leaves of other volumes, say carelessly, "Got a new book of California poetry out, haven't you?" purchase it, and quietly depart. There were as yet no notices from the press; the big dailies were silent; there was something ominous in this calm.

Out of it the bolt fell. A well-known mining weekly, which I here poetically veil under the title of the Red Dog *Jay Hawk*, was first to swoop down upon the tuneful and unsuspecting quarry. At this century-end of fastidious and complaisant criticism, it may be interesting to recall the direct style of the Californian "sixties." "The hogwash and 'purp'-stuff ladled out from the slop bucket of Messrs. —— and Co., of 'Frisco, by some lop-eared Eastern apprentice, and called 'A Compilation of Californian Verse,' might be passed over, so far as criticism goes. A club in the hands of any able-bodied citizen of Red Dog and a steamboat ticket to the Bay, cheerfully contributed from this office, would be all-sufficient. But when an imported greenhorn dares to call his flapdoodle mixture 'Californian,' it is an insult to the State that has produced the gifted 'Yellow Hammer,' whose lofty flights have from time to time dazzled our readers in the columns of the *Jay Hawk*. That this complacent editorial jackass, browsing among the dock and thistles which he has served up in this volume, should make no allusion to California's greatest bard, is rather a confession of his idiocy than a slur upon the genius of our esteemed con-

tributor." I turned hurriedly to my pile of rejected contributions—the *nom de plume* of "Yellow Hammer" did *not* appear among them; certainly I had never heard of its existence. Later, when a friend showed me one of that gifted bard's pieces, I was inwardly relieved! It was so like the majority of the other verses, in and out of the volume, that the mysterious poet might have written under a hundred aliases. But the Dutch Flat *Clarion*, following, with no uncertain sound, left me small time for consideration. "We doubt," said that journal, "if a more feeble collection

"I WAS INWARDLY RELIEVED."

of drivel could have been made, even if taken exclusively from the editor's own verses, which we note he has, by an equal editorial incompetency, left out of the volume. When we add that, by a felicity of idiotic selection, this person has chosen only one, and the least characteristic, of the really clever poems of Adoniram Skaggs, which have so often graced these columns, we have said enough to satisfy our readers." The Mormon Hill *Quartz Crusher* relieved this simple directness with more fancy: "We don't know

why Messrs. —— and Co. send us, under the title of 'Selections of Californian Poetry,' a quantity of slumgullion which really belongs to the sluices of a placer mining camp, or the ditches of the rural districts. We have sometimes been compelled to run a lot of tailings through our stamps, but never of the grade of the samples offered, which, we should say, would average about 33⅓ cents per ton. We have, however, come across a single specimen of pure gold evidently overlooked by the serene ass who has compiled this volume. We copy it with pleasure, as it has already shone in the 'Poet's Corner' of the *Crusher* as the gifted effusion of the talented Manager of the Excelsior Mill, otherwise known to our delighted readers as 'Outcrop.'" The Green Springs *Arcadian* was no less fanciful in imagery: "Messrs. —— and Co. send us a gaudy green-and-yellow, parrot-coloured volume, which is supposed to contain the first callow 'cheepings' and 'peepings' of Californian songsters. From the flavour of the specimens before us we should say that the nest had been disturbed prematurely. There seems to be a good deal of the parrot inside as well as outside the covers, and we congratulate our own sweet singer 'Blue Bird,' who has so often made these columns melodious, that she has escaped the ignominy of being exhibited in Messrs. —— and Co.'s aviary." I should add that this simile of the aviary and its occupants was ominous, for my tuneful choir was relentlessly slaughtered; the bottom of the cage was strewn with feathers! The big dailies collected the criticisms and published them in their own columns with the grim irony of exaggerated head-lines. The book sold tremendously on account of this abuse, but I am afraid that the public was disappointed. The fun and interest lay in the criticisms, and not in any pointedly ludicrous quality in the rather commonplace collection, and I fear I cannot claim for it even that merit. And it will be observed that the animus of the criticism appeared to be the omission rather than the retention of certain writers.

But this brings me to the most extraordinary feature of this singular demonstration. I do not think that the publishers were at all troubled by it; I cannot conscientiously say that *I* was; I have every reason to believe that the poets themselves, in and out of the volume, were not displeased at the notoriety they had not expected, and I have long since been convinced that my most remorseless critics were not in earnest, but were obeying some sudden impulse started by the first attacking journal. The

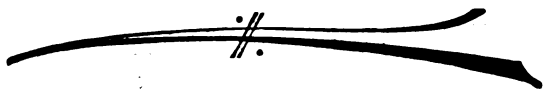
extravagance of the Red Dog *Jay Hawk* was emulated by others: it was a large, contagious joke, passed from journal to journal in a peculiar cyclonic Western fashion. And there still lingers, not unpleasantly, in my memory the conclusion of a cheerfully scathing review of the book which may make my meaning clearer: "If we have said anything in this article which might cause a single pang to the poetically sensitive nature of the youthful individual calling himself Mr. Francis Bret Harte—but who, we believe, occasionally parts his name and his hair in the middle —we will feel that we have not laboured in vain, and

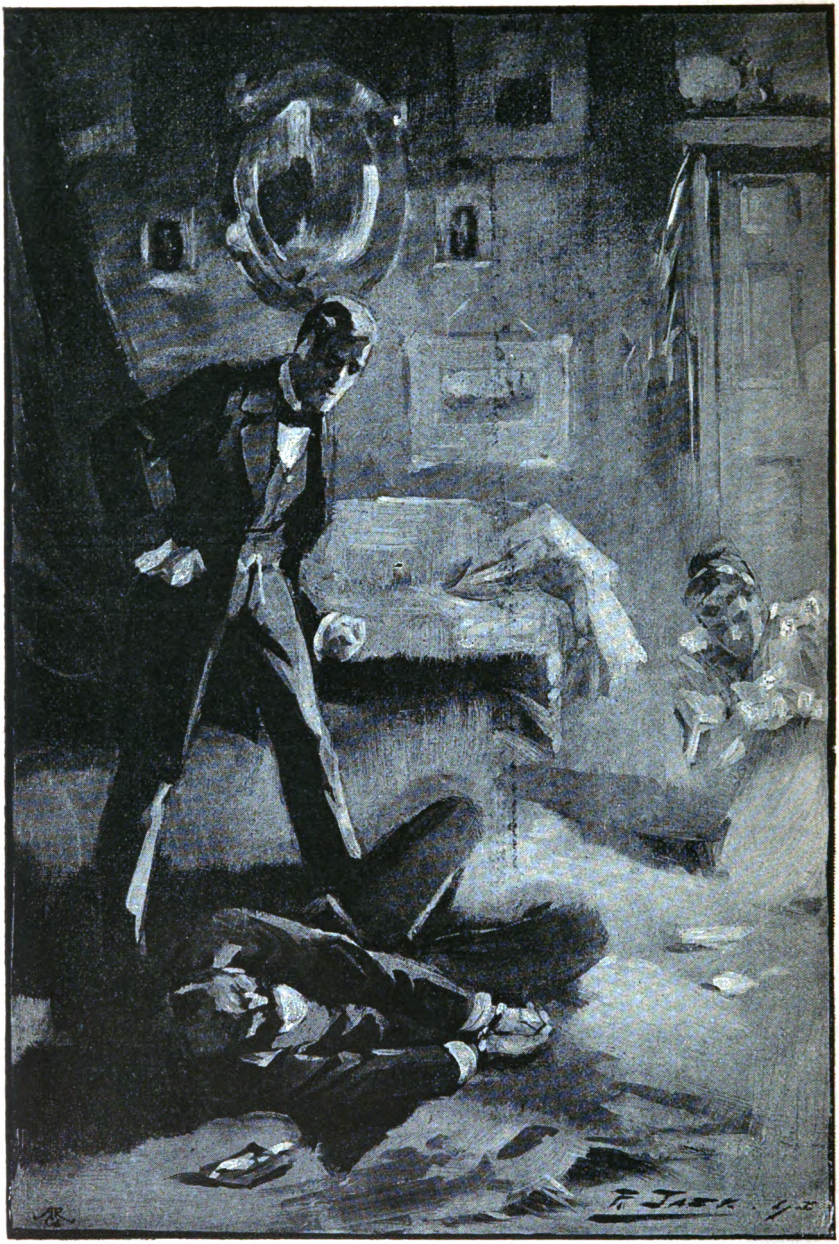
"THE BOOK SOLD TREMENDOUSLY."

are ready to sing *Nunc Dimittis*, and hand in our checks. We have no doubt of the absolutely pellucid and lacteal purity of Franky's intentions. He means well to the Pacific Coast, and we return the compliment. But he has strayed away from his parents and guardians while he was too fresh. He will not keep without a little salt."

It was thirty years ago. The book and its Rabelaisian criticisms have been long since forgotten. Alas! I fear that even the capacity for that Gargantuan laughter which met them, in those days, exists no longer. The names I have used are necessarily fictitious, but where I have been obliged to quote the criticisms

from memory I have, I believe, only softened their asperity. I do not know that this story has any moral. The criticisms here recorded never hurt a reputation nor repressed a single honest aspiration. A few contributors to the volume, who were of original merit, have made their mark, independently of it or its critics. The editor, who was for two months the most abused man on the Pacific slope, within the year became the editor of its first successful magazine. Even the publisher prospered, and died respected!





"IT IS TRUE!' SAID I, PINNING HIM DOWN."

The Greenstone God and the Stockbroker.

By Fergus Hume. Illustrations by R. Jack.

AS a rule, the average detective gets twice the credit he deserves. I am not talking of the pictorial miracle-monger, but of the flesh and blood reality who is liable to err, and frequently proves such liability. You can take it as certain that a detective who sets down a clean run and no hitch as entirely due to his astucity is young in years, and still younger in experience. Older men, who have been bamboozled a hundred times by the craft of criminality, recognise the influence of Chance to make or mar. There you have it! Nine times out of ten, Chance does more in clinching a case than all the dexterity and mother-wit of the man in charge. The exception must be engineered by an infallible apostle. Such a one is unknown to me—out of print.

This opinion, based rather on collective experience than on any one episode, can be substantiated by several incontrovertible facts. In this instance, one will suffice. Therefore, I take the Brixton case to illustrate Chance as a factor in human affairs. Had it not been for that Maori fetich—but such rather ends than begins the story, therefore it were wise to dismiss it for the moment. Yet that piece of greenstone hanged—a person mentioned hereafter.

When Mr. and Mrs. Paul Vincent set up housekeeping at Ulster Lodge they were regarded as decided acquisitions to Brixton society. She, pretty and musical; he, smart in looks, moderately well off, and an excellent tennis player. Their antecedents, who were known as his father and her mother (both since deceased), had lived a life of undoubted middle-class respectability. The halo thereof still environed their children, who were, in consequence of such inherited grace and their own individualisms, much sought after by genteel Brixtonians. Moreover, this popular couple were devoted to each other, and even after three years of marriage still posed as lovers. This was as it should be, and by admiring friends and relations the Vincents were regarded as paragons of matrimonial perfection. Vincent was a stockbroker, and therefore passed most of his time in the City.

Judge, then, of the commotion, when pretty Mrs. Vincent was discovered in the study, stabbed to the heart. So aimless a crime were scarce imaginable. She had many friends, no known enemies, yet came to this tragic end. Closer examination revealed that the escritoire had been broken into, and Mr. Vincent declared himself the poorer by two hundred pounds. Primarily, therefore, robbery was the sole object, but, by reason of Mrs. Vincent's interference, the thief had been converted into a murderer.

"MRS. VINCENT WAS DISCOVERED."

So excellently had the assassin chosen his time, that such choice argued a close acquaintance with the domestic economy of Ulster Lodge. The husband was detained in town till midnight; the servants (cook and housemaid), on leave to attend wedding festivities, were absent till eleven o'clock. Mrs. Vincent was therefore absolutely alone in the house for six hours, during which period the crime was committed. The servants discovered the body of their unfortunate mistress, and at once raised the alarm. Later on Vincent arrived, to find his wife dead, his house in possession of the police, and the two servants in hysterics. For that night nothing could be done, but at dawn a move was made towards elucidating the mystery. At this point I come into the story.

Instructed at nine to take charge of the case, by ten o'clock I was on the spot noting details and collecting evidence. Beyond

removal of the body, nothing had been disturbed, and the study was in precisely the same condition as when the crime was discovered. I carefully examined the apartment, and afterwards interrogated the cook, the housemaid, and, lastly, the master of Ulster Lodge. The result gave me slight hope of securing the assassin.

The room (a fair-sized one looking out on a lawn between house and road) was furnished in cheap bachelor fashion. An old-fashioned desk placed at right angles to the window, a round table reaching nigh the sill, two arm-chairs, three of the ordinary cane-seated kind, and on the mantelpiece an arrangement of pipes, pistols, boxing-gloves, and foils. One of these latter was missing.

A single glimpse showed how terrible a struggle had taken place before the murderer had overpowered his victim. The table-cloth lay disorderly on the floor, two of the lighter chairs were overturned, and the desk, with several drawers open, was considerably hacked about. No key was in the door-lock facing the escritoire, and the window-snick was securely fastened.

Further search resulted in the following discoveries :—

1. A hatchet used for chopping wood (found near the desk).
2. A foil with the button broken off (lying under the table).
3. A greenstone idol (edged under the fender).

The cook (defiantly courageous by reason of brandy) declared that she had left the house at four o'clock on the previous day, and had returned close on eleven. The back door (to her surprise) was open. With the housemaid she went to inform her mistress of this fact, and found the body lying midway between door and fireplace. At once she called in the police. Her master and mistress were a most attached couple, and (so far as she knew) had no enemies.

Similar evidence was obtained from the housemaid, with the additional information that the hatchet belonged to the wood-shed. The other rooms were undisturbed.

Poor young Vincent was so broken down by the tragedy that he could hardly answer my questions with calmness. Sympathising with his natural grief, I interrogated him as delicately as was possible, and am bound to admit that he replied with remarkable promptitude and clearness.

"What do you know of this unhappy affair?" I asked, when we were alone in the drawing-room. He refused to stay in the study, as was surely natural under the circumstances.

"Absolutely nothing," he replied. "I went to the City

yesterday at ten in the morning, and, as I had business to do, told my wife I would not return till midnight. She was full of health and spirits when I last saw her, but now——" incapable of further speech he made a gesture of despair. Then, after a pause, added, "Have you any theory on the subject?"

"Judging from the wrecked condition of the desk I should say robbery——"

"Robbery?" he interrupted, changing colour. "Yes, that was the motive. I had two hundred pounds locked up in the desk."

"I CAREFULLY EXAMINED THE APARTMENT."

"In gold or notes?"

"The latter. Four fifties. Bank of England."

"You are sure they have gone?"

"Yes! The drawer in which they were placed is smashed to pieces."

"Did anyone know you had placed two hundred pounds therein?"

"No! Save my wife, and yet —ah!" he said, breaking off abruptly, "that is impossible."

"What is impossible?"

"I shall tell you when I hear your theory!"

"You got that notion out of novels of the shilling sort," I answered dryly; "every detective doesn't theorise on the instant. I haven't any particular theory that I know of. Whomsoever committed this crime must have known your wife was alone in the house, and that there was two hundred locked up in that desk. Did you mention these two facts to anyone?"

Vincent pulled his moustache in some embarrassment. I guessed by the action he had been indiscreet.

"I don't wish to get an innocent person into trouble," he said at length, "but I did mention it—to a man called Roy."

"For what reason?"

"It is a bit of a story. I lost two hundred to a friend at cards, and drew four fifties to pay him. He went out of town, so I

locked the money up in my desk for safety. Last night Roy came to me at the club, much agitated, and asked me to loan him a hundred. Said it meant ruin else. I offered him a cheque, but he wanted cash. I then told him I had left two hundred at home, so could not possibly lend it. He asked if he could not go to Brixton for it, but I said the house was empty, and——"

"But it wasn't empty," I interrupted.

"I believed it would be! I knew the servants were going to that wedding, and thought my wife, instead of spending a lonely evening, would stay out and see a friend."

"Well, and after you told Roy that the house was empty?"

"He went away, looking awfully cut up, and swore he must have the money at any price. But it is quite impossible he could have anything to do with this."

"I don't know. You told him where the money was, and that the house was unprotected, as you thought. What was more probable than that he should have come down with the intention of stealing the money? If so, what follows? Entering by the back door, he takes the hatchet from the wood-shed to open the desk. Your wife, hearing a noise, discovers him in the study. In a state of frenzy, he snatches a foil from the mantelpiece, and kills her. Then decamps with the money. There is your theory, and a mighty bad one—for Roy."

"You don't intend to convict him?" asked Vincent, quickly.

"Not on insufficient evidence! If he committed the crime and stole the money it is certain that, sooner or later, he will change the notes. Now if I had the numbers——"

"Here are the numbers," said Vincent, producing his pocket-book. "I always take the numbers of such large notes. But surely," he added, as I copied them down—"surely you don't think Roy guilty?"

"I don't know. I should like to know his movements on that night."

"I cannot tell you. He saw me at the Chestnut Club about seven o'clock, and left immediately afterwards. I kept my business appointment, went to the Alhambra, and then returned home."

"Give me Roy's address, and describe his personal appearance?"

"He is a medical student, and lodges at No. ——, Gower Street. Tall, fair-haired, a good-looking young fellow."

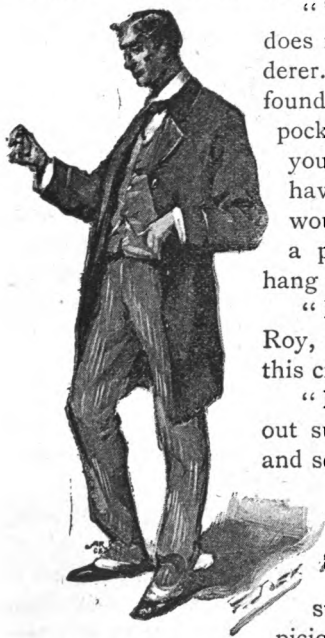
"And his dress last night?"

"He wore evening dress, concealed by a fawn-coloured overcoat."

I duly noted these particulars, and was about to take my leave when I recollected the greenstone idol. It was so strange an object to find in prosaic Brixton that I could not help thinking it must have come there by accident.

"By the way, Mr. Vincent," said I, producing the monstrosity, "is this greenstone god your property?"

"I never saw it before," replied he, taking it in his hand. "Is it—ah!" he added, dropping the idol, "there is blood on it."



"'TIS THE BLOOD OF YOUR WIFE."

"'Tis the blood of your wife, sir. If it does not belong to you, it does to the murderer. From the position in which this was found I fancy it slipped out of his breast-pocket as he stood over his victim. As you see, it is stained with blood. He must have lost his presence of mind, else he would not have left behind so damning a piece of evidence. This idol, sir, will hang the assassin of Mrs. Vincent."

"I hope so, but, unless you are sure of Roy, do not mar his life by accusing him of this crime."

"I certainly shall not convict him without sufficient proof," I answered promptly, and so took my departure.

Vincent showed up very well in this preliminary conversation. Much as he desired to punish the criminal, yet he was unwilling to subject Roy to possibly unfounded suspicions. Had I not forced the club episode out of him I doubt whether he would have told it. As it was, the information gave me the necessary clue. Roy alone knew that the notes were in the escritoire, and imagined (owing to the mistake of Vincent) that the house was empty. Determined to have the money at any price (his own words), he but intended robbery, till the unexpected appearance of Mrs. Vincent merged the lesser in the greater crime.

My first step was to advise the Bank that four fifty pound notes, numbered so and so were stolen, and that the thief or his deputy would probably change them within a reasonable period.

I did not say a word about the crime, and kept all special details out of the newspapers; as the murderer would probably read up the reports, so as to shape his course by the action of the police, I judged it wiser that he should know as little as possible. Those minute press notices do more harm than good. They gratify the morbid appetite of the public, and put the criminal on his guard. Thereby the police work in the dark, but he—thanks to the posting up of special reporters—knows the doings of the law, and baffles it accordingly.

The greenstone idol worried me considerably. I wanted to know how it had got into the study of Ulster Lodge. When I knew that, I could nail my man. But there was considerable difficulty to overcome before such knowledge was available. Now a curiosity of this kind is not a common object in this country. A man who owns one must have come from New Zealand, or have obtained it from a New Zealand friend. He could not have picked it up in London. If he did, he would not carry it constantly about with him. It was therefore my idea that the murderer had received the idol from a friend on the day of the crime. That friend, to possess such an idol, must have been in communication with New Zealand. The chain of thought is somewhat complicated, but it began with curiosity about the idol, and ended in my looking up the list of steamers going to the Antipodes. Then I carried out a little design which need not be mentioned at this moment. In due time it will fit in with the hanging of Mrs. Vincent's assassin. Meanwhile, I followed up the clue of the bank-notes, and left the greenstone idol to evolve its own destiny. Thus I had two strings to my bow.

The crime was committed on the twentieth of June, and on the twenty-third two fifty pound notes, with numbers corresponding to those stolen, were paid into the Bank of England. I was astonished at the little care exercised by the criminal in concealing his crime, but still more so when I learned that the money was banked by a very respectable solicitor. Furnished with the address, I called on this gentleman. Mr. Maudsley received me politely, and had no hesitation in telling me how the notes had come into his possession. I did not state my primary reason for the inquiry.

"I hope there is no trouble about these notes," said he, when I explained my errand. "I have had sufficient already."

"Indeed, Mr. Maudsley, and in what way?"

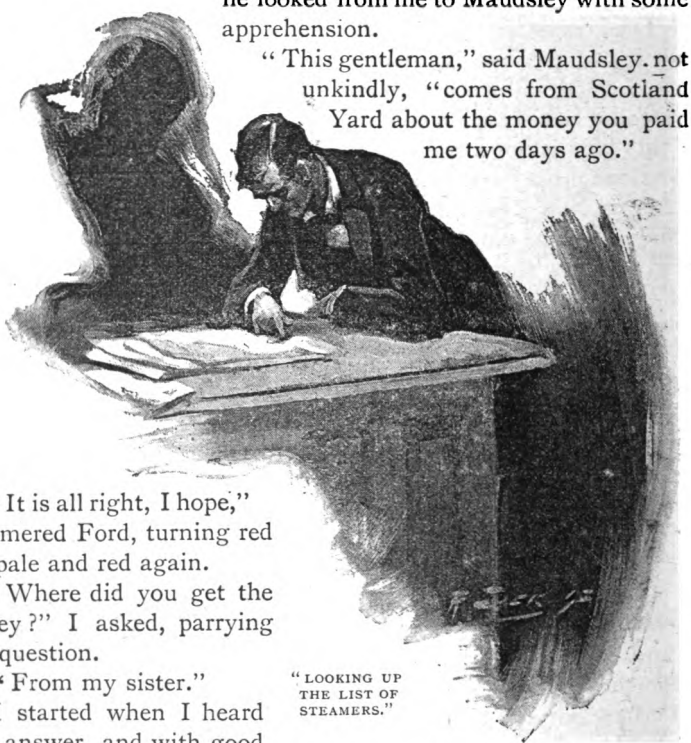
For answer he touched the bell, and when it was answered,

"Ask Mr. Ford to step this way," he said. Then, turning to me, "I must reveal what I hoped to keep silent, but I trust the revelation will remain with yourself."

"That is as I may decide after hearing it. I am a detective, Mr. Maudsley, and, you may be sure, do not make these inquiries out of idle curiosity."

Before he could reply, a slender, weak-looking young man, nervously excited, entered the room. This was Mr. Ford, and he looked from me to Maudsley with some apprehension.

"This gentleman," said Maudsley, not unkindly, "comes from Scotland Yard about the money you paid me two days ago."



"LOOKING UP THE LIST OF STEAMERS."

"It is all right, I hope," stammered Ford, turning red and pale and red again.

"Where did you get the money?" I asked, parrying this question.

"From my sister."

I started when I heard this answer, and with good reason. My enquiries about Roy had revealed that he was in love with a hospital nurse whose name was Clara Ford. Without doubt she had obtained the notes from Roy, after he had stolen them from Ulster Lodge. But why the necessity of the robbery?

"Why did you get a hundred pounds from your sister?" I asked Ford.

He did not answer, but looked appealingly at Maudsley. That gentleman interposed.

"We must make a clean breast of it, Ford," he said, with a sigh; "if you have committed a second crime to conceal the first, I cannot help you. This time matters are not at my discretion."

"I have committed no crime," said Ford desperately, turning to me. "Sir, I may as well admit that I embezzled one hundred pounds from Mr. Maudsley to pay a gambling debt. He kindly and most generously consented to overlook the delinquency if I replaced the money. Not having it myself I asked my sister. She, a poor hospital nurse, had not the amount. Yet, as non-payment meant ruin to me, she asked a Mr. Julian Roy to help her. He at once agreed to do so, and gave her two fifty pound notes. She handed them to me, and I gave them to Mr. Maudsley, who paid them into the bank."

This, then, was the reason of Roy's remark. He did not refer to his own ruin, but to that of Ford. To save this unhappy man, and for love of the sister, he had committed the crime. I did not need to see Clara Ford, but at once made up my mind to arrest Roy. The case was perfectly clear, and I was fully justified in taking this course. Meanwhile, I made Maudsley and his clerk promise silence, as I did not wish Roy to be put on his guard by Miss Ford, through her brother.

"Gentlemen," I said, after a few moments' pause, "I cannot, at present, explain my reasons for asking these questions, as it would take too long, and I have no time to lose. Keep silent about this interview till to-morrow, and by that time you shall know all."

"Has Ford got into fresh trouble?" asked Maudsley, anxiously.

"No, but someone else has."

"My sister," began Ford faintly, when I interrupted him at once.

"Your sister is all right, Mr. Ford. Pray trust in my assistance; no harm shall come to her or to you, if I can help it—but, above all, be silent."

This they readily promised, and I returned to Scotland Yard, quite satisfied that Roy would get no warning. The evidence was so clear that I could not doubt the guilt of Roy. Else how had he come into possession of the notes? Already there was sufficient proof to hang him, yet I also hoped to clinch the certainty by proving his ownership of the greenstone idol. It did not belong to Vincent, or to his dead wife, yet someone must have brought it into the study. Why not Roy, who, to all appearances, had committed the crime, the more so as the image

was splashed with the victim's blood? There was no difficulty in obtaining a warrant, and with this I went off to Gower Street.

Roy loudly protested his innocence. He denied all knowledge of the crime and of the idol. I expected the denial, but was astonished at the defence he put forth. It was very ingenious, but so manifestly absurd that it did not shake my belief in his guilt. I let him talk himself out—which was perhaps wrong—but he would not be silent, and then took him off in a cab.

"I swear I did not commit the crime," he said, passionately; "no one was more astonished than I at the news of Mrs. Vincent's death."

"A WEAK-LOOKING YOUNG MAN ENTERED THE ROOM."

"Yet you were at Ulster Lodge on the night in question?"

"I admit it," he replied, frankly; "were I guilty I would not do so. But I was there at the request of Vincent."

"I must remind you that all you say now will be used in evidence against you."

"I don't care! I will defend myself. I asked Vincent for a hundred pounds, and——"

"Of course you did, to give to Miss Ford."

"How do you know that?" he asked, sharply.

"From her brother, through Maudsley. He paid the notes supplied by you into the bank. If you wanted to conceal your crime you should not have been so reckless."

"I have committed no crime," retorted Roy, fiercely. "I obtained the money from Vincent, at the request of Miss Ford, to save her brother from being convicted for embezzlement."

"Vincent denies that he gave you the money!"

"Then he lies. I asked him at the Chestnut Club for one hundred pounds. He had not that much on him, but said that two hundred were in his desk at home. As it was imperative that I should have the money on the night, I asked him to let me go down for it."

"And he refused!"

"He did not. He consented, and gave me a note to Mrs. Vincent, instructing her to hand me over a hundred pounds. I went to Brixton, got the money in two fifties, and gave them to Miss Ford. When I left Ulster Lodge, between eight and nine, Mrs. Vincent was in perfect health, and quite happy."

"An ingenious defence," said I, doubtfully, "but Vincent absolutely denies that he gave you the money."

Roy stared hard at me to see if I were joking. Evidently the attitude of Vincent puzzled him greatly.

"That is ridiculous," said he, quietly; "he wrote a note to his wife instructing her to hand me the money."

"Where is that note?"

"I gave it to Mrs. Vincent."

"It cannot be found," I answered; "if such a note were in her possession it would now be in mine."

"Don't you believe me?"

"How can I against the evidence of those notes and the denial of Vincent?"

"But he surely does not deny that he gave me the money?"

"He does."

"He must be mad," said Roy, in dismay; "one of my best friends, and to tell so great a falsehood. Why, if——"

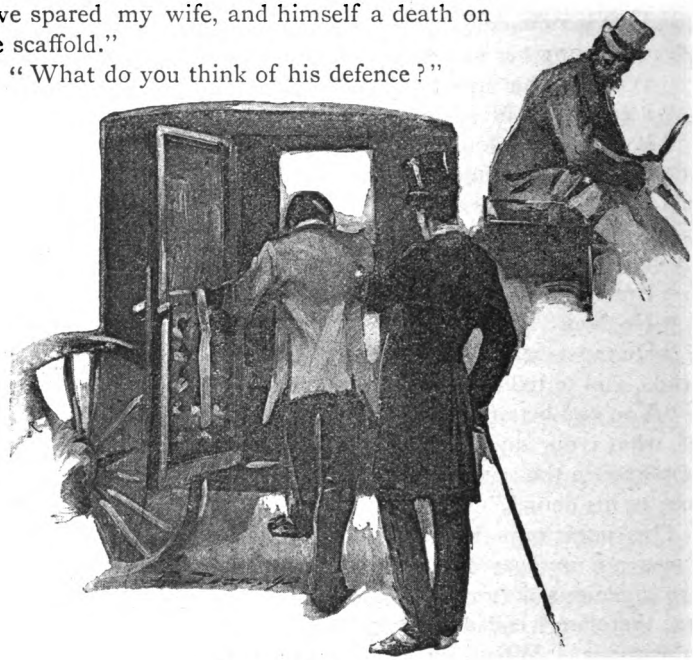
"You had better be silent," I said, weary of this foolish talk; "if what you say is true, Vincent will exonerate you from complicity in the crime. If things occurred as you say, there is no sense in his denial."

This latter remark was made to stop the torrent of his speech. It was not my business to listen to incriminating declarations, or to ingenious defences. All that sort of thing is for judge and jury; therefore I ended the conversation as above, and marched off my prisoner. Whether the birds of the air carry news I do not know, but they must have been busy on this occasion, for next morning every newspaper in London was congratulating me on my clever capture of the supposed murderer. Some detectives would have been gratified by this public laudation—I was not. Roy's passionate protestations of innocence made me feel uneasy, and I doubted whether, after all, I had the right man under lock and key. Yet the evidence was strong against him. He admitted having been with Mrs. Vincent on the fatal night, admitted possession of two fifty pound notes. His only defence was the letter of the stockbroker, and this was missing—if, indeed, it had ever been written.

Vincent was terribly upset by the arrest of Roy. He liked the young man, and had believed in his innocence so far as was possible. But in the face of such strong evidence, he was forced to believe him guilty; yet he blamed himself severely that he had not lent the money, and so averted the catastrophe.

"I had no idea that the matter was of such moment," he said to me, "else I would have gone down to Brixton myself and given him the money. Then his frenzy would have spared my wife, and himself a death on the scaffold."

"What do you think of his defence?"



"MARCHED OFF MY PRISONER."

"It is wholly untrue. I did not write a note, nor did I tell him to go to Brixton. Why should I, when I fully believed no one was in the house?"

"It was a pity you did not go home, Mr. Vincent, instead of to the Alhambra."

"It was a mistake," he assented, "but I had no idea Roy would attempt the robbery. Besides, I was under engagement to go to the theatre with my friend Dr. Monson."

"Do you think that idol belongs to Roy?"

"I can't say, I never saw it in his possession. Why?"

"Because I firmly believe that if Roy had not the idol in his pocket on that fatal night he is innocent. Oh, you look astonished, but the man who murdered your wife owns that idol."

The morning after this conversation a lady called at Scotland Yard, and asked to see me. Fortunately, I was then in the neighbourhood, and, guessing whom she was, afforded her the interview she sought. When all left the room she raised her veil, and I saw before me a noble-looking woman, somewhat resembling Mr. Maudsley's clerk. Yet, by some contradiction of nature, her face was the more virile of the two.

"You are Miss Ford?" I said, guessing her identity.

"I am Clara Ford," she answered quietly. "I have come to see you about Mr. Roy."

"I am afraid nothing can be done to save him."

"Something must be done," she said passionately. "We are engaged to be married, and all a woman can do to save her lover I will do. Do you believe him guilty?"

"In the face of such evidence, Miss Ford——"

"I don't care what evidence is against him," she retorted; "he is as innocent of the crime as I am. Do you think a man fresh from the committal of a crime would place the money won by that crime in the hands of the woman he professes to love? I tell you he is innocent."

"Mr. Vincent doesn't think so."

"Mr. Vincent!" said Miss Ford, with scornful emphasis. "Oh, yes! I quite believe he would think Julian guilty."

"Surely not if it were possible to think otherwise! He is, or rather was, a staunch friend to Mr. Roy."

"So staunch that he tried to break off the match between us. Listen to me, sir. I have told no one before, but I tell you now. Mr. Vincent is a villain. He pretended to be the friend of Julian, and yet dared to make proposals to me—dishonourable proposals, for which I could have struck him. He, a married man, a pretended friend, wished me to leave Julian and fly with him."

"Surely you are mistaken, Miss Ford. Mr. Vincent was most attentive to his wife."

"He did not care at all for his wife," she replied, steadily. "He was in love with me. To save Julian annoyance I did not tell him of the insults offered to me by Mr. Vincent. Now that Julian is in trouble by an unfortunate mistake, Mr. Vincent is delighted."

"It is impossible. I assure you Vincent is very sorry to——"

"You do not believe me," said she, interrupting. "Very well, I shall give you proof of the truth. Come to my brother's rooms in Bloomsbury. I shall send for Mr. Vincent, and if you are concealed you shall hear from his own lips how glad he is that my lover and his wife are removed from the path of his dishonourable passion."

"I shall come, Miss Ford, but I think you are mistaken in Vincent."

"You shall see," she replied, coldly. Then, with a sudden change of tone, "Is there no way of saving Julian? I am sure he is innocent. Appearances are against him, but it was not he who committed the crime. Is there no way—no way?"

"SHE RAISED HER VEIL."

Moved by her earnest appeal, I produced the greenstone idol, and told her all I had done in connection with it. She listened eagerly, and readily grasped at the hope thus held out to her of saving Roy. When in possession of all the facts she considered in silence for some two minutes. At the end of that time she drew down her veil and prepared to take her departure.

"Come to my brother's rooms in Alfred Place, near Tottenham Court Road," said she, holding out her hand. "I promise you that there you shall see Mr. Vincent in his true character. Good-bye till Monday at three o'clock."

From the colour in her face and the bright light in her eye, I guessed she had some scheme in her head for the saving of Roy. I think myself clever, but after that interview at Alfred Place I declare I am but a fool compared to this woman. She put two and two together, ferreted out unguessed-of evidence, and finally produced the most wonderful result. When she left me at this moment the greenstone idol was in her pocket. With that she hoped to prove the innocence of her lover and the guilt of another person. It was the cleverest thing I ever saw in my life.

The inquest on the body of Mrs. Vincent resulted in a verdict of wilful murder against some person or persons unknown. Then

she was buried, and all London waited for the trial of Roy. He was brought up and charged with the crime, reserved his defence, and in due course was committed for trial. Meantime I called on Miss Ford at the appointed time, and found her alone.

"Mr. Vincent will be here shortly," she said, calmly. "I see Julian is committed for trial."

"And has reserved his defence."

"I will defend him," said she, with a strange look in her face; "I am not afraid for him now. He saved my unhappy brother. I am going to save him."

"Have you discovered anything?"

"I have discovered a good deal. Hush! That is Mr. Vincent," she added, as a cab drew up to the door. "Hide yourself behind this curtain, and do not appear until I give you the signal."

Wondering what she was about to do, I concealed myself as directed. The next moment Vincent was in the room, and then ensued one of the strangest of scenes. She received him coldly, and motioned him to a seat. Vincent was nervous, but she might have been of stone, so little emotion did she display.

"'COME TO MY BROTHER'S ROOMS.'"

"I have sent for you, Mr. Vincent," she said, "to ask your help in releasing Julian."

"How can I help you," he answered, in amazement—"willingly would I do so, but it is out of my power."

"I don't think it is!"

"I assure you, Clara," he began eagerly, when she cut him short.

"Yes, call me Clara! Say that you love me! Lie, like all men, and yet refuse to do what I wish."

"I am not going to help Julian to marry you," declared he, sullenly. "You know that I love you—I love you dearly, I wish to marry you——"

"Is not that declaration rather soon after the death of your wife?"

"My wife is gone, poor soul, let her rest."

"Yet you loved her?"

"I never loved her," he said, rising to his feet. "I love you! From the first moment I saw you I loved you. My wife is dead! Julian Roy is in prison on a charge of murdering her. With these obstacles removed there is no reason why we should not marry."

"If I marry you," she said, slowly, "will you help Julian to refute this charge?"

"I cannot! The evidence is too strong against him!"

"You know he is innocent, Mr. Vincent."

"I do not! I believe he murdered my wife."

"You believe he murdered your wife," she reiterated, coming a step nearer and holding out the greenstone idol—"do you believe that he dropped this in the study when his hand struck the fatal blow?"

"I don't know!" he said, coolly glancing at the idol, "I never saw it before."

"Think again, Mr. Vincent—think again. Who was it that went to the Alhambra at eight o'clock with Dr. Monson, and met there the captain of a New Zealand steamer with whom he was acquainted?"

"It was I," said Vincent, defiantly, "and what of that?"

"This!" she said, in a loud voice. "This captain gave you the greenstone idol at the Alhambra, and you stuffed it into your breast pocket. Shortly afterwards you went down to Brixton, after the man whose death you had plotted. You repaired to your house, killed your unhappy wife, who received you in all innocence, took the balance of the money, hacked the desk, and then dropped by accident this idol which convicted you of the crime."

During this speech she advanced step by step towards the wretched man, who, pale and anguished, retreated before her fury. He came right to my hiding place, and almost fell into my arms. I had heard enough to convince me of his guilt, and the next moment was struggling with him.

"It is a lie! a lie!" he said hoarsely, trying to escape.

"It is true!" said I, pinning him down. "From my soul I believe you guilty."

During the fight his pocket-book fell on the floor, and the papers therein were scattered. Miss Ford picked up one spotted with blood.

"The proof!" she said, holding it before us. "The proof that Julian spoke the truth. There is the letter written by you which authorised your unhappy wife to give him one hundred pounds."

"SHE ADVANCED STEP BY STEP."

Vincent saw that all was against him, and gave in without further struggles, like the craven he was.

"Fate is too strong for me," he said, when I snapped the handcuffs on his wrists. "I admit the crime. It was for love of you that I did it. I hated my wife, who was a drag on me, and I hated Roy, who loved you. In one sweep I thought to rid myself of both. His application for that money put the chance into my hand. I went to Brixton, found that my wife had given the money as directed, and then killed her with the foil snatched from the wall. I smashed the desk and overturned the chair, to favour the idea of the robbery, and then left the house. Driving to a higher station than Brixton, I caught a train and was speedily back at the Alhambra. Monson never suspected my absence, thinking I was in a different corner of the house. I had thus an *alibi* ready. Had it not been for that letter, which I was fool enough to keep, and that infernal idol that dropped out of my pocket, I would have hanged Roy and married you. As it turns out the idol has betrayed me. And now, sir," he added, turning to me, "you had better take me to gaol."

I did so there and then. After the legal formalities were gone through Julian Roy was released, and ultimately married Miss Ford. Vincent was hanged, as he well deserved to be, for so cowardly a crime. My reward was the greenstone god, which I keep as a memento of a very curious case. Some weeks later Miss Ford told me the way in which she had laid the trap.

"When you revealed your suspicions about the idol," she said, "I was convinced that Vincent had something to do with the crime. You mentioned Dr. Monson as having been with him at the Alhambra. He is one of the doctors at the hospital in which I am employed. I asked him about the idol, and showed it to him. He remembered it being given to Vincent by the captain of the K——. The curious look of the thing had impressed itself on his memory. On hearing this I went to the docks and saw the captain. He recognised the idol, and remembered giving it to Vincent. From what you told me I guessed the way in which the plot was carried out, so spoke to Vincent as you heard. Most of it was guesswork, and only when I saw that letter was I absolutely sure of his guilt. It is due to the greenstone god."

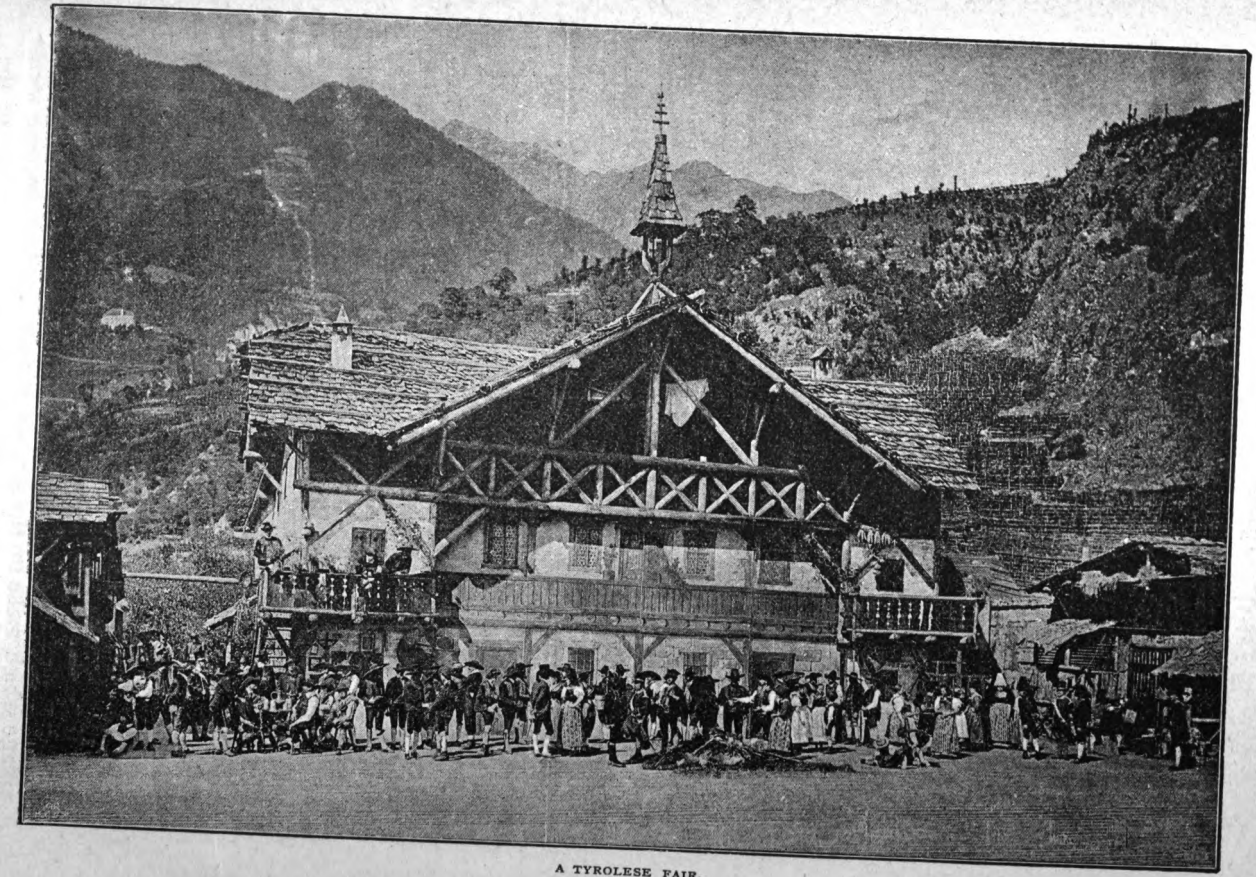
So I think, but also to Chance. But for the accident of it dropping out of Vincent's pocket, Roy would have been hanged for a crime of which he was innocent. Therefore do I say that in nine cases out of ten Chance does more in clinching a case than all the dexterity of the man in charge.

The Folks Play in the Tyrol.

By Robert Barr.

Illustrations by B. Johannes, of Meran.

EVERY Sunday in the autumn and early winter the people of Meran, a town that was once the capital of the Tyrol, and is now a most charming winter resort, give a representation of historical scenes, entitled "Tyrol in the year 1809." The actors are the tradespeople of the town and the farmers round about. The theatre is in the open air, on the plain to the west of Meran, and consists of an enclosure with seats for several thousand people, the heads of the audience being protected by the blue sky above. At the back is a range of covered boxes. The stage for the most part is the solid earth, but sometimes the action takes place in the interior of the picturesque Tyrolese house built in front of the "stalls." This house is part of the stage village that is seen on either side, and the most prominent part. The whole thing is realistic to the last degree, and the general appearance to the spectator who has paid his gulden and a half will be understood better by a glance at the picture than by reading pages of description. The background is enough to make a London spectacular manager green with helpless envy. First, there are terraces of grapes, then forests of pine, and, lastly, bare porphyry peaks 6,000 feet high, with snowfields beyond against the blue sky, rising into the air more than 10,000 feet. To the left hangs over us the grim square tower of Durnstein Castle; lower, and to the right, the ruins of Brunnenberg, another castle. Above Brunnenberg is the ancient Schloss Tirol, the earliest residence of the Counts of Tyrol, with its grey walls and picturesque red roof, and by its side the precipitous cliff down which the rest of the castle fell, showing that a man may build on a rock and yet be as unsafe as he who built upon the sand. The little village of St. Peter, with its white house or two and its tiny church spire, stands out against the green mountain side. And the beauty of it all is that the house and village which make up the stage setting are quite in keeping with this grandeur of background, for they are but a duplicate of the houses and villages we see from our seats in the "dress circle."



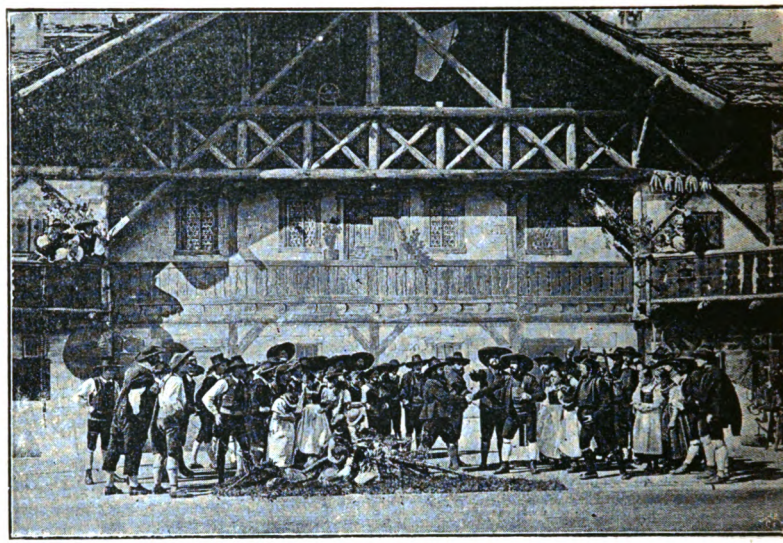
A TYROLESE FAIR.

Such a performance as this at Meran must inevitably invite comparison with the Oberammergau dramatic entertainment. With all deference to Oberammergau, I think its chief merit is that the outbreak takes place but once in ten years. The Oberammergau lodging-house keepers and waiters give a rendition of something done by foreigners nearly two thousand years ago in a country they never saw, some thousands of miles away. It stands to reason that a company of Adelphi actors would do the thing much better, the ignorance being equal in each case, and the experience favouring the Adelphi players.

But the Tyrolese are the descendants of the men who took part in these stirring events less than a hundred years ago. The actors take down from the pegs in their barns the deadly scythes which, for the most part, form their military equipment on the stage, just as their ancestors took down similar weapons in 1809 to go to the real war. The events dramatised took place right here, and in this neighbourhood, north and south, and the eternal peaks that look down on the mimicry in 1893 looked down with equal impassiveness on the real events eighty-four years ago. And, what is more, you feel as you look at the play that, if the French were to tackle this hilly country to-morrow, instead of peaceful, enervated Siam, these same men would gather up their agricultural implements, and with a whoop and a scythe descend on the invaders, scattering consternation and ghastly wounds within the swath they swung. There is, therefore, about the play at Meran a deadly, earnest reality that thrills the spectator as if he were looking at real battle, while certain of the scenes are so pathetic that the most callous man of the world finds it impossible to look on them unmoved, while those more inclined towards "sensibility," as old-fashioned novels have it, unblushingly weep.

The central character in the play is, of course, Andreas Hofer. I was about to call Andreas Hofer the William Tell of the Tyrol, but I remember that Tell fought against the Austrians, while Hofer fought for them. Tell wanted his country to be independent of Austria, Hofer wanted his country to be dependent on Austria. Both succeeded. Hofer led the Tyrolese peasantry to victory, drove out the French and Bavarians, baffled Napoleon for months, was ruler, for a while, of Tyrol, was at length captured by Napoleon, and cruelly, unjustly murdered by him at Mantua.

The shooting of Hofer was not the first nor the last murder the little spiteful, revengeful man committed; but it was a most wanton crime, and Napoleon's own generals tried to prevent it.



COMMENCEMENT OF THE REVOLT IN MERAN.

The Tyrolese mourned for Hofer, grieving at the loss of a good neighbour, a genial innkeeper, and honest dealer in horses and wine, but they never suspected that one of the world's heroes had lived among them. This fact had to be pointed out to them by the poets and story-tellers of Germany, by foreign artists and writers. It was not until 1880 that they thought of putting a tablet on the *châlet* in which Hofer was captured, betrayed by one of his own comrades, not for gold, but under threats of death. Now, however, Hofer has his proper place in the annals of the country he fought for, and only the other day the Emperor of Austria unveiled a monument to him at Innsbruck.

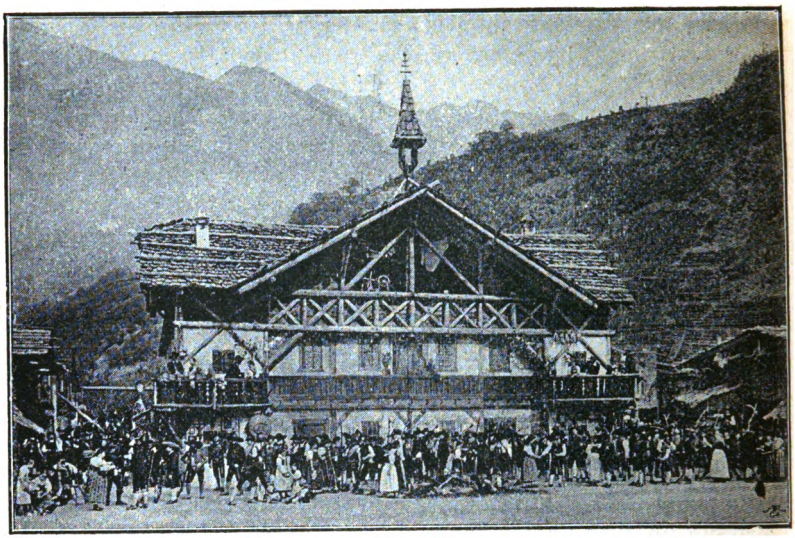
ANDREAS HOFER. (ANTON CHRISTIN.)

On Sunday, apparently, the whole population of Meran was flocking through the old Vinstgau Gate, streaming along the

Gratsch Road toward the open country, where the Folksplayhaus is situated. The scene outside was like a part of a play itself. "We keep by the old fashion" is a saying among the people here, and, unlike the natives of Switzerland, the Tyrolese are not ashamed of their national costumes. There were booths for the sale of wine and beer, while benches and tables were scattered all over the place. Here the gaily-attired peasant and his "best girl" sat, the one great beer mug, economically, in many instances, sufficing for the two. Broad-brimmed hats with an upright feather dancing in the breeze; extraordinary vests of green, red, or yellow; breeches reaching just above the knee, and stockings coming up to an inch or two below, thus leaving the knee bare, seemed a sort of compromise between the costumes of the knickerbockered Englishman and the kilted Highlander—all this made a striking picture as the wearers in hundreds moved here and there, smoking their long pipes and vile tobacco.

Inside, the play was announced by the ringing of a bell and the striking up of an unseen band, in which brass and bass drum predominated. One of the front doors opened, and a pretty young girl came out and spoke the prologue after the fashion of old English stage ritual. She did it very well, and gave us some historical information. When she had curtsied sweetly and returned the way she came, a picturesquely attired and somewhat ragged ruffian appeared on the roof. He had an extraordinary whip in his hand. The handle was perhaps three feet long and tapered towards both ends, being several inches thick in the middle. The lash was like a modified boa-constrictor several inches thick, and was some fifteen or twenty feet long. If an ordinary man attempted to use such an instrument the lash would coil itself around him and bring him down from that roof in about two seconds. But the ragman knew his business. He gave several yells fit to arouse anyone recently deceased, then, bracing himself back, he flung his lash to the winds. In the most beautiful curves it writhed, now to his right, now to his left, looking in the bright sunlight like an energetic fiery serpent out on the spree. Further and further back leaned the ragman, both hands thrashing the air with that gigantic whip, and at every twist it was as if a gun fired. Bang, bang, bang, went this tremendous whip, not like pistol-shots, but infinitely louder. It was simply a cannonade.

If that industrious individual will go to London, I can assure him a tremendous ovation. He would take the town by storm on any music-hall stage, besides, doubtless, flecking off



ADIEU TO THE LANDSTÜRM.

a number of heads on the back benches. I have seen most of Shakespeare's plays, but never anything like this whip-cracking in them. This detonating exhibition, it may be added, represents the bringing down of the cows from the mountains in the autumn. The cattle come down amidst a fusillade of whip-cracks.

ANDREAS HOFER'S WIFE. (MISS BERTHA EGGER.)

The whip-shots were the signals for the trooping in of the natives. A village fair was on, and the peasantry poured in from the two side streets, filling up the space in front of the stage house. Some rode on horses, some on donkeys, most were on foot. A wagon drawn by oxen brought in a huge tun of wine, just such an outfit as you might meet any day in the autumn on any of the winding roads about Meran coming from the grape fields; in fact, the vehicle and the oxen and the driver

were employed during the week in the useful occupation I have mentioned. The Bavarian officials inspect the wine, after the manner of Customs officers all the world over, and the wagon drives on. Passing to and fro among the laughing, drinking crowd are the detested minions of the Bavarian Government in uniform. One of them at last puts his arm around a Tyrolese girl, and then there is a row. This is quelled by the energetic interference of the more cool-headed, but every one is wrought up to a pitch of great resentment against the intruding foreigner, and they all resolve to rise in revolt against him. In the midst of this exciting scene the church bell tolls solemnly the hour for prayer, and at once all tumult is hushed, the people simultaneously sink to their knees, with heads bowed, the leaders strike hands, remaining thus with eyes uplifted to Heaven.

It is the beginning of a religious war. "For God, our country, and the Kaiser," is the cry.

The second scene opens in the Sandhof, up the Passeir Valley, the house in which Hofer was born. The Passeir Valley begins at Meran, penetrating north among the wild mountains. The turbulent Passeir flows along the valley, through the centre of Meran, ordinarily a clear green, foaming stream, but after a rain a roaring torrent, typically tinged a blood-red hue by the *débris* washed down from the mountains of porphyry. The Sandhof stands to-day as it did in 1809, a few miles to the north of Meran.

The front of the house on the stage slides out of sight and reveals the interior of the inn, with the leaders deliberating. Here we see Hofer for the first time, and also his heroic wife, whom Napoleon took prisoner in the snow, lacking, however, the courage to shoot her and her captured family, his vengeance being apparently satisfied with the murder of the husband and father. This scene concludes with the marching out of the reserves, which makes a most animated picture. Old and young take part, armed with every implement of offence that hands could be laid upon, ancient muskets, rifles, scythes, reaping-hooks, pikes, knives, and clubs. Over two hundred people are on the stage, and their motley garb, the incongruous multiplicity of their weapons, the marching side by side of tottering old men and beardless youths, the ringing cheers and uncontrollable enthusiasm of the warriors, all combine to produce such a scene as a man rarely has the privilege of beholding.

The third section of the play opens with a *tableau* of a battle. It was a well-composed piece, with Hofer in the midst cheering

THE DYING STEINHUBER'S FAREWELL.

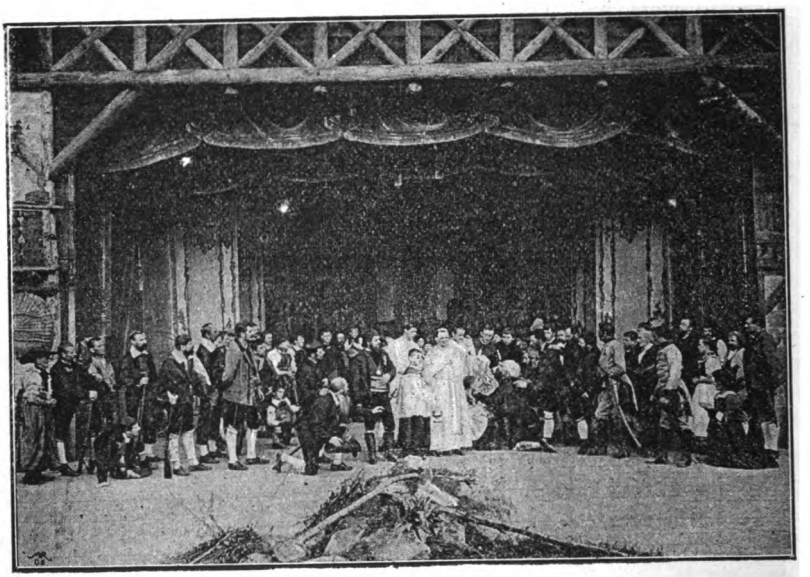
on his followers, holding aloft the flag. The flag used in the play is the real flag that Hofer carried. In the foreground kneels the capuchin monk Haspinger, holding a crucifix over the face of a dying man. Haspinger, who died as recently as 1858, fought as bravely and as effectively as Hofer throughout the war.

Then followed "Hofer's Day of Honour" and "The Decorating of Hofer in the Church." The Emperor had sent a silver chain to be put around the neck of the hero, and Hofer was made military and civil Governor of the Tyrol. The innkeeper dwelt in the palace of the kings, and for some time Hofer presided in the Schloss Tirol, which now frowned down upon us from the heights as we sat there looking at the play. In that castle, says the good and always accurate Mr. Baedeker, "Hofer conducted the administration with his characteristic shrewdness and simplicity."

I have often admired Mr. Henry Irving's treatment of a scene in a cathedral. It is a stage setting he is fond of, and it lends itself to impressive and picturesque results. I never expected to see Mr. Irving beaten at his own speciality in a remote mountain village, but so it was. The decorating of Hofer in the church was admirably done. In seeing a Lyceum cathedral setting, you do not forget you are in a theatre; in looking at this mountain-church picture, one felt it was the real thing. Perhaps that is because the peasant-actors are more devout than the Lyceum company. The villagers apparently forgot they were acting, and remembered only they were taking part in an impressive service in their own church. Even the majority of the audience were carried away by the reality of it all, and they bowed their heads and murmured the responses without thinking where they actually were.

The interior of the stage house changed to the long aisle of the Court Church at Innsbruck. At the far end was the altar with all its gorgeous decoration. Two officers of the church in long cream-coloured robes led Hofer up the aisle, leaving him kneeling in front of the altar. The censor-swingers were filling the church with the dim mist of the incense. The priest held aloft the silver chain. The organ pealed, and the priest came slowly down the steps and placed the Emperor's gift on the neck of the Man of the People.

As this impressive scene was shut from our view there occurred an unrehearsed effect that was almost equally impressive. The concealed band struck up the "Kaiser's Hymn"—the National Anthem of Austria. The audience at once rose to



DECORATING HOFER IN THE CHURCH.

its feet, and, turning from the stage, all eyes seemed to be fixed on an oldish man in general's uniform who stood in the centre box. The man was evidently much moved by the scene he had just witnessed; his eyes were wet, and, erect as he stood, it was evident that it required all his self-control to keep his face from showing his emotion. When the solemn strains of the hymn were finished, the audience, remaining on its feet, cried "Hoch!" three times, with hands raised aloft. The effect of this word sounding simultaneously from two thousand throats is simply indescribable. The man raised his hand in military salute.

LANDSTÜRMER.

A capuchin monk stood beside me. He was a member of the same monastery that had sent out the heroic Haspinger. I said to him:

"Who is that man in the box?"

"It is the Erzherzog (Arch-Duke) Carl Ludwig, the brother of the Emperor."

The scene that followed was one to make Sir Augustus Harris tear his hair—if he has any—in despair. It was quite in his own line, and represented the battle on the Küchelberg. Now the Küchelberg is the hill at our right, and a man seated on the enclosure around the auditorium could almost touch its green sides with his outstretched hand. So the scenery on which the play-fight was to be fought was the identical ground on which the real battle had taken place. Think of that! Sir Augustus (I came near writing St. Augustus, for everything hereabouts reminds one of saints rather than sirs).

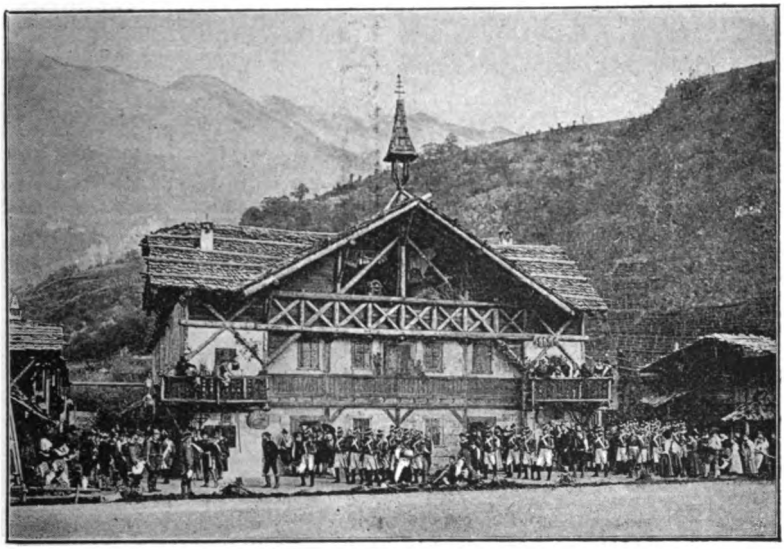
The battle, of course, we did not see, but we heard it, and saw the blue smoke curling up, and got a whiff now and then of burnt gunpowder. The stage setting, as I have said, was magnificent, and Sir Harris cannot hope to emulate it. If he attempted to build a canvas mountain ten thousand feet high at Drury Lane, the County Council would stop him as a violater of the sky-sign ordinance. But even if he succeeded in erecting the canvas mountains he could not hope for the acoustic effect which gave such reality to the battle we listened to. The roar of cannon floated across the valley and broke in a deafening sound-wave on the breast of the opposite mountains, rattling among the cliffs like the quick thunder that jumps on the fleet heels of the lightning-flash. Then the more distant peaks echoed back, and all the mountain-tops seemed in a vibrating tumult, crash following crash, blending with and augmenting the rumbling echoes. You can't do that sort of thing with sheet iron at Drury Lane, Augustus.

The riflemen swarmed out to take part in the fight, and the sharp, rapid crack-crack-crack of their weapons soon began to punctuate the slower boom of the cannon.

The women within our view waited anxiously, with clasped hands, the result of the battle. Soon, however, there was more for them to do than wait. The wounded began to come in, some tottering, leaning on their unhurt comrades, others on stretchers. It was a realistic and ghastly scene, made the more striking by the din of the incessant fusillade outside and the answering of the echoing hills. At last the shots become more scattered and distant, then the victorious Tyrolese with cheers trooped in with the leaders of the enemy as prisoners.

The concluding pictures in the last act form a pathetic contrast to what has gone before. The first *tableau* is the capture of

THE CAPTURE OF HOFER.



HOFER BROUGHT PRISONER TO MERAN.

Hofer and his family at the *châlet* high up among the mountains to the north of Meran. The deep snow lies all around, for the arrest took place on the 20th January, 1810. Then follows his trial, his eloquent defence, the decision of his judges, the majority of whom do not wish to condemn him to death, but the orders of Napoleon are imperative, and Hofer is sentenced. This trial took place in a house in Meran, now marked with a marble tablet.

BRUNNER, LAMBACHER, GSBIRNER.

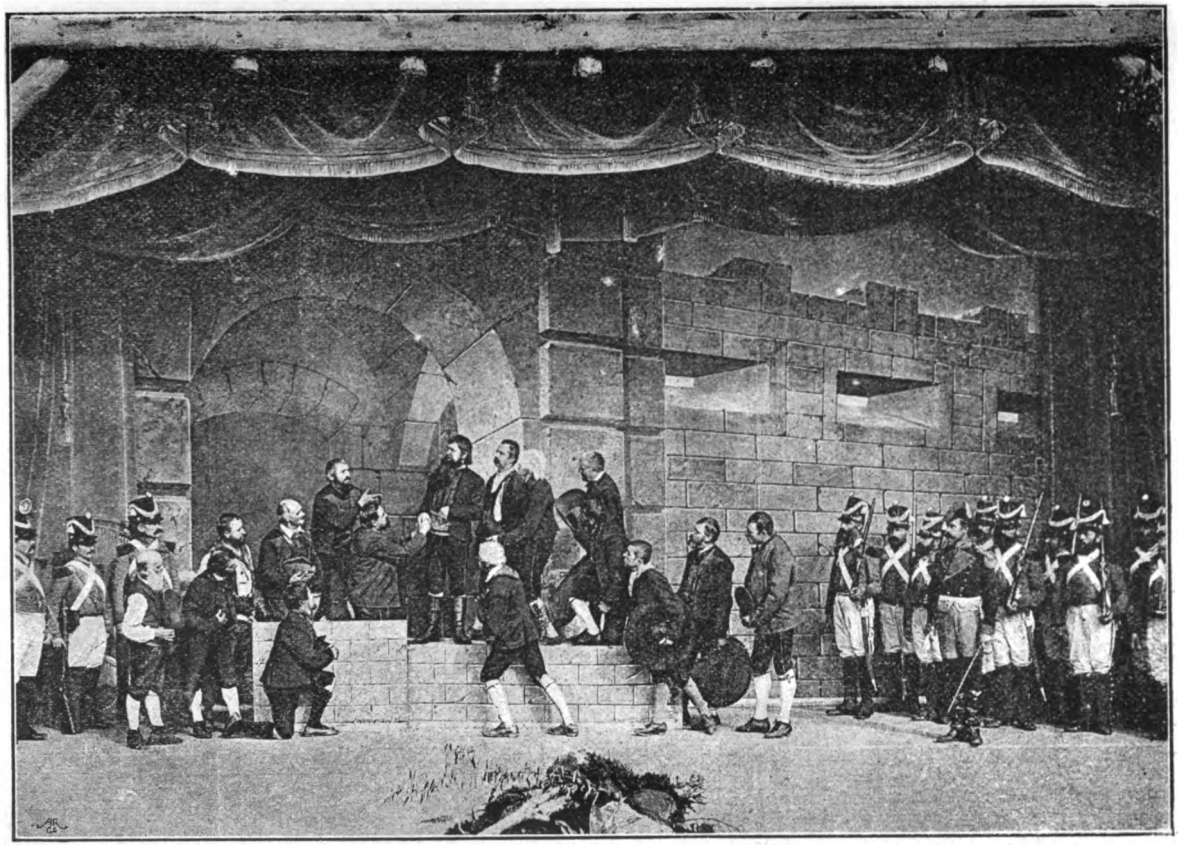
There is a final scene at Mantua, where his comrades, with their great cart-wheel hats under their arms, bid him farewell. He is led away, his friends spring forward to follow, but their progress is barred by the guns of the soldiers held horizontally. They stand thus, during some moments of intense silence, until the shots ring out that tell of Hofer's murder. Then the tension relaxes, and a sigh goes up

ANDREAS HOFER'S WIFE.
(MISS BERTHA FGGER.)

WAITRESS
(MISS FANNY NAGELE.)

PARTHAUES ANNELE.
(MISS MARIE ENDRIZZI.)

WAITRESS
(MISS FANNY NAGELE.)



THE FAREWELL TO HOFER.

from actors and audience alike. It seems as if the tragedy had but that moment happened instead of eighty-three years before.

To conclude, the Folks Play at Meran must be termed a complete success, whether viewed from the standpoint of the monk from the cloister, the nobleman from the court at Vienna, or the man somewhat tired of theatres from London. The acting reminds one of the performances of the Meiningen Court Company in the utter disregard of stage waits or any of the bugbears of theatrical convention. Of course, the actors for the most part, as in the scene at the village fair, or in the tavern, or at the church, are simply taking part in scenes that they take part in once a week or oftener in real life. It therefore hardly can be called acting. All they have to do is to forget there is an audience and go ahead, which, apparently, they are able to accomplish.

The photographs which illustrate this article were taken by Mr. B. Johannes, of Meran, whose work is noted not only in the Tyrol, but throughout Germany and Austria, and who has given to *The Idler* the exclusive right of reproduction in England.

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

ROBERT BUCHANAN.

"By father's side I heirship trace
To many a seer of Celtic race,
Whose blood transmitted down to me,
Puts glamour into all I see."

—Robert Buchanan.

Exchange is Robbery.

(In Two Parts.)

By Richard Marsh. Illustrations by Sydney Cowell.

II.

WHEN Messrs. Ruby and Golden arrived at Datchet House they found the Duke at home. He received them in his own apartment. On their entrance he was standing behind a writing table.

"Well, gentlemen, to what am I indebted for the honour of this visit?"

Mr. Golden took on himself the office of spokesman.

"We have called, your Grace, upon a very delicate matter." The Duke inclined his head—he also took a seat. "The Duchess of Datchet has favoured us this morning with a visit."

"The Duchess!"

"The Duchess."

Mr. Golden paused. He was conscious that this *was* a delicate matter. "When her Grace quitted our establishment she *accidentally*"—Mr. Golden emphasised the adverb; he even repeated it—"*accidentally* left behind some of her property in exchange for ours."

'HE RECEIVED THEM IN HIS OWN APARTMENT."

"Mr. Golden!" The Duke stared. "I don't understand you."

Mr. Golden then and there resolved to make the thing quite plain.

"I will be frank with your Grace. When the Duchess left our establishment this morning she took with her some twenty thousand pounds worth of diamonds—it may be more, we have only been able to give a cursory glance at the state of things—and left behind her paste imitations of those diamonds instead."

The Duke stood up. He trembled—probably with anger.

"Mr. Golden, am I—am I to understand that you are mad?"

"The case, your Grace, is as I stated. Is not the case as I state it, Mr. Ruby?"

Mr. Ruby took out his handkerchief to relieve his brow. His habit of showing excessive deference to the feelings and the whims of very great people was almost more than he could master.

"I—I'm afraid, Mr. Golden, that it is. Your—your Grace will understand that—that we should never have ventured to—to come here had we not been most—most unfortunately compelled."

"Pray make no apology, Mr. Ruby. Allow me to have a clear understanding with you, gentlemen. Do I understand that you charge the Duchess of Datchet—the Duchess of Datchet!"—the Duke echoed his own words, as though he were himself unable to believe in the enormity of such a thing—"with stealing jewels from your shop?"

"If your Grace will allow me to make a distinction without a difference—we charge no one with anything. If your Grace will give us your permission to credit the jewels to your account, there is an end of the matter."

"What is the value of the articles which you say have gone?"

"On that point we are not ourselves, as yet, accurately informed. I may as well state at once—it is better to be frank, your Grace—that this sort of thing appears to have been going on for some time. It is only an hour or so since we began to have even a suspicion of the extent of our losses."

"THE DUKE STOOD UP."

"Then, in effect, you charge the Duchess of Datchet with robbing you wholesale?"

Mr. Golden paused. He felt that to such a question as this it would be advisable that he should frame his answer in a particular manner.

"Your Grace will understand that different persons have different ways of purchasing. Lady A. has her way. Lady B. has her way, and the Duchess of Datchet has hers."

"Are you suggesting that the Duchess of Datchet is a kleptomaniac?"

Mr. Golden was silent.

S S

"Do you think that that is a comfortable suggestion to make to a husband, Mr. Golden?" Just then someone tapped at the door. "Who's there?"

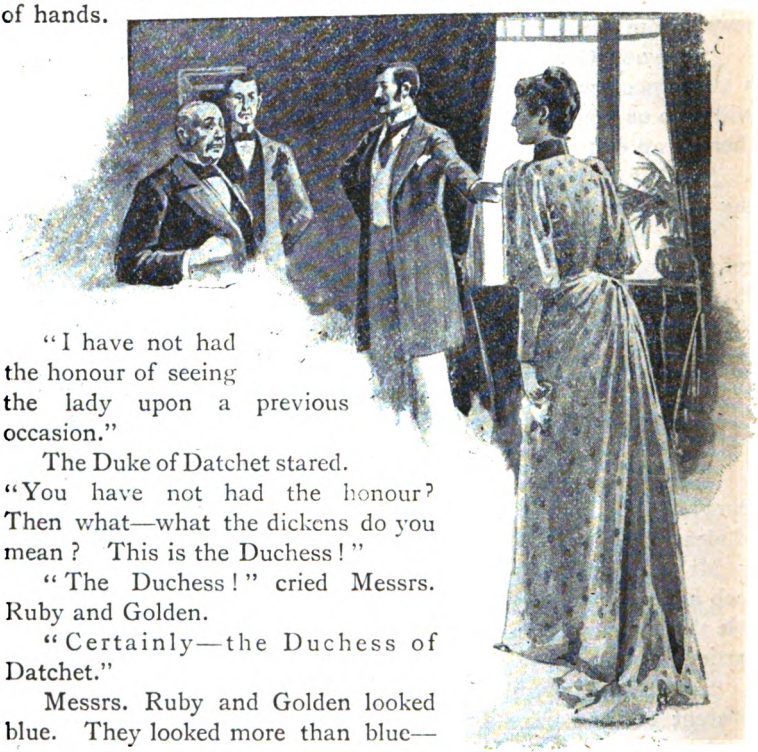
A voice—a feminine voice—enquired without, "Can I come in?"

Before the Duke could deny the right of entry, the door opened and a woman entered. A tall woman, and a young and a lovely one. When she perceived Messrs. Ruby and Golden she cast an enquiring look in the direction of the Duke. "Are you engaged?"

The Duke was eyeing her with a somewhat curious expression of countenance. "I believe you know these gentlemen?"

"Do I? I ought to know them perhaps, but I'm afraid I don't."

Mr. Ruby was all affability and bows, and smiles and rubbings of hands.



"THIS IS THE DUCHESS!"

"I have not had the honour of seeing the lady upon a previous occasion."

The Duke of Datchet stared. "You have not had the honour? Then what—what the dickens do you mean? This is the Duchess!"

"The Duchess!" cried Messrs. Ruby and Golden.

"Certainly—the Duchess of Datchet."

Messrs. Ruby and Golden looked blue. They looked more than blue—they looked several colours of the rainbow all at once. They stared as though they could not believe the evidence of their eyes and ears. The Duke turned to the Duchess. He opened the door for her.

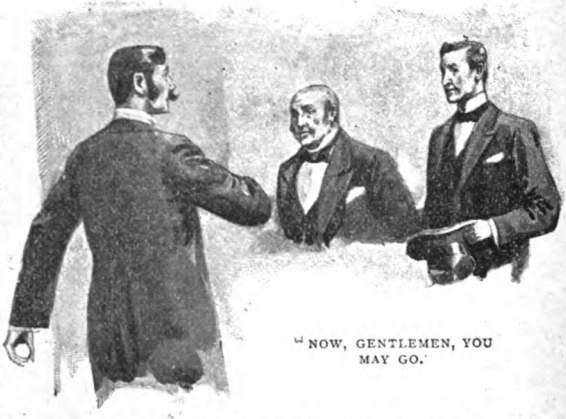
"Duchess, will you excuse me for a moment? I have something which I particularly wish to say to these gentlemen."

The Duchess disappeared. When she had gone the Duke not only closed the door behind her, but he stood with his back against the door which he had closed. His manner, all at once, was scarcely genial.

"Now, what shall I do with you, gentlemen? You come to my house and charge the Duchess of Datchet with having been a constant visitor at your shop for the purpose of robbing you, and it turns out that you have actually never seen the Duchess of Datchet in your lives until this moment."

"But," gasped Mr. Ruby, "that—that is not the lady who came to our establishment, and—and called herself the Duchess of Datchet."

"Well, sir, and what has that to do with me? Am I responsible for the proceedings of every sharper who comes to your shop and chooses to call herself the Duchess of Datchet? I should advise you, in future, before advancing reckless charges, to make some enquiries into the *bonâ fides* of your customers, Mr. Ruby. Now, gentlemen, you may go."



"NOW, GENTLEMEN, YOU MAY GO."

The Duke held the door wide open, invitingly. Mr. Golden caught his partner by the sleeve, as though he feared that he would, with undue celerity, accept the invitation.

"Hardly, your Grace, there is still something which we wish to say to you." The Duke of Datchet shut the door again.

"Then say it. Only say it, if possible, in such a manner as not to compel me to—kick you, Mr. Golden."

"Your Grace will believe that in anything I have said, or in anything which I am to say, nothing is further from my wish than to cause your Grace annoyance. But, on the other hand, surely your Grace is too old, and too good a customer of our house, to wish to see us ruined."

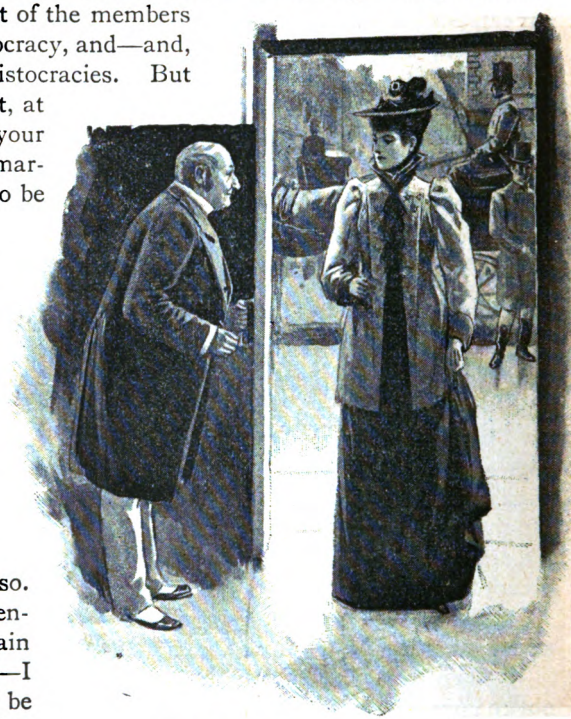
"I had rather, Mr. Golden, see you ruined ten thousand times over than that you should ruin my wife's fair fame."

Mr. Golden hesitated; he seemed to perceive that the Duke's retort was not irrelevant. He turned to Mr. Ruby.

"Mr. Ruby, will you be so good as to explain what reasons we had for believing that this person was what she called herself—the Duchess of Datchet? Because your Grace must understand that we did not entertain that belief without having at least *some* grounds to go upon."

Mr. Ruby, thus appealed to, began to fidget. He did not seem to relish the office which his partner had imposed upon him. The tale which he told was rather lame—still, he told it.

"Your Grace will understand that I—I am acquainted, at least by sight, with most of the members of the British aristocracy, and—and, indeed, of other aristocracies. But it so happened that, at the period of your Grace's recent marriage, I happened to be abroad, and—and, not only so, but—but the lady your Grace married was—was a lady—from—from the country."



"I AM THE DUCHESS OF DATCHET."

"I am perfectly aware, Mr. Ruby, whom I married."

"Quite so, your Grace, quite so. Only—only I was endeavouring to explain how it was that I—I did not happen to be acquainted with her Grace's personal appearance. So that when a carriage and pair drove up to our establishment with your Grace's crest upon the panel——"

"My crest upon the panel!"

"Your Grace's crest upon the panel"—as Mr. Ruby continued, the Duke of Datchet bit his lip—"and a lady stepped out of it and said, 'I am the Duchess of Datchet; my husband tells me that he is an old customer of yours,' I was only too glad to see her

Grace, because, as your Grace is aware, we have the honour of having your Grace as an old customer of ours. 'My husband has given me this cheque to spend with you.' When she said that she took a cheque out of her purse, one of your Grace's own cheques drawn upon Messrs. Coutts, 'Pay Messrs. Ruby and Golden, or order, one thousand pounds,' with your Grace's signature attached. I have seen too many of your Grace's cheques not to know them well. She purchased goods to the value of a thousand pounds, and she gave us your Grace's cheque to pay for them."

"She gave you that cheque, did she?"

Mr. Golden interposed, "We presented the cheque, and it was duly honoured. On the face of such proof as that, what could we suppose?"

"I'LL MAKE A CLEAN BREAST OF IT."

The Duke was moving about the room—it seemed, a little restlessly.

"It didn't necessarily follow, because a woman paid for her purchases with a cheque of mine, that that woman was the Duchess of Datchet."

"I think, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, that it did. At least, the presumption was strong upon that side. May I ask to whom your Grace's cheque was given?"

"You may ask, but I don't see why I should tell you. It was honoured, and that is sufficient."

"I don't think it is sufficient, and I don't think that your Grace will think so either, if you consider for a moment. If it had not been for the strong presumptive evidence of your Grace's cheque, we should not have been robbed of many thousand pounds."

The Duke of Datchet paced restlessly to and fro. Messrs. Ruby and Golden watched him. At last he moved towards his writing table. He sat down on the chair behind it. He stretched out his legs in front of him. He thrust his hands into his trousers pockets.

"I'll make a clean breast of it. You fellows can keep a still tongue in your heads—keep a still tongue about what I am going to tell you." His hearers bowed. They were coming to the point—at last. "Eh"—in spite of his announced intention of making a clean breast of it, his Grace rather stumbled in his speech.

"Before I was married I—I had some acquaintance with—with a certain lady. When I married, that acquaintance ceased. On the last occasion on which I saw her she informed me that she was indebted to you in the sum of a thousand pounds for jewellery. I gave her a cheque to discharge her liability to you, and to make sure that she did discharge the liability, I made the cheque payable to you, which, I now perceive, was perhaps not the wisest thing I could have done. But, at the same time, I wish you clearly to comprehend that I have every reason to believe that the lady referred to is, to put it mildly, a most unlikely person to—to rob anyone."

"We must request you to furnish us with that lady's name and address. And I would advise your Grace to accompany us in an immediate visit to that lady."

"That is your advice is it, Mr. Golden? I am not sure that I appreciate it quite so much as it may possibly deserve."

"Otherwise, as you will yourself perceive, we shall be compelled to put the matter at once in the hands of the police, and, your Grace, there will be a scandal."

The Duke of Datchet reflected. He looked at Mr. Golden, he looked at Mr. Ruby, he looked at the ceiling, he looked at the floor, he looked at his boots—then he looked back again at Mr. Golden. At last he rose. He shook himself a little—as if to shake his clothes into their proper places. He seemed to have threshed the *pros* and *cons* of the matter well out, mentally, and to have finally decided.

"As I do *not* want a scandal, I think I will take your excellent advice, Mr. Golden—which I now really do appreciate at its proper value—and accompany you upon that little visit. Shall we go at once?"

"At once—if your Grace pleases."

III.

The Duke of Datchet's brougham, containing the Duke of Datchet himself upon one seat, and Messrs. Ruby and Golden cheek by jowl upon the other, drew up in front of a charming villa in the most charming part of charming St. John's Wood. The Duke's ring—for the Duke himself did ring, and there *was* no knocker—was answered by a most unimpeachable-looking man-servant in livery." The man-servant was not only unimpeachable-look-

ing—which every servant ought to look—but good-looking, too, which, in a servant, is not regarded as quite so indispensable. He was, indeed, so good-looking as to be quite a "beauty man." So young, too! A mere youth!

When this man-servant opened the door, and saw to whom he had opened it, he started. And not only did he start, but Messrs. Ruby and Golden started too, particularly Mr. Golden. The Duke of Datchet, if he observed this little by-play, did not condescend to notice it.

"Is Mrs. Mansfield in?"

"I believe so. I will enquire. What name?"

"Never mind the name, and I will make my own enquiries. You needn't announce me, I know the way."

The Duke of Datchet seemed to know the way very well indeed. He led the way up the staircase; Messrs. Ruby and Golden followed. The man-servant remained at the foot of the stairs, as if doubtful whether or not he ought to follow. When they had reached the landing, and the man-servant, still remaining below, was out of sight, Mr. Golden turned to Mr. Ruby.

"Where on earth have I seen that man before?"

"I was just addressing to myself the same enquiry," said Mr. Ruby.

The Duke paused. He turned to the partners.

"What's that? The servant? Have you seen the man before? The plot is thickening. I am afraid 'the Duchess' is getting warm."

"QUITE A 'BEAUTY MAN.'"

Apparently the Duke knew his way so well that he did not think it necessary to announce himself at the door of the room to which he led the partners. He simply turned the handle and went in, Messrs. Ruby and Golden close upon his heels. The room which he had entered was a pretty room, and contained a pretty occupant. A lady, young and fair, rose from a couch which was at the opposite side of the apartment, and, as was most justifiable under the circumstances, stared. "Harold!" she cried.

"Mrs. Mansfield!"

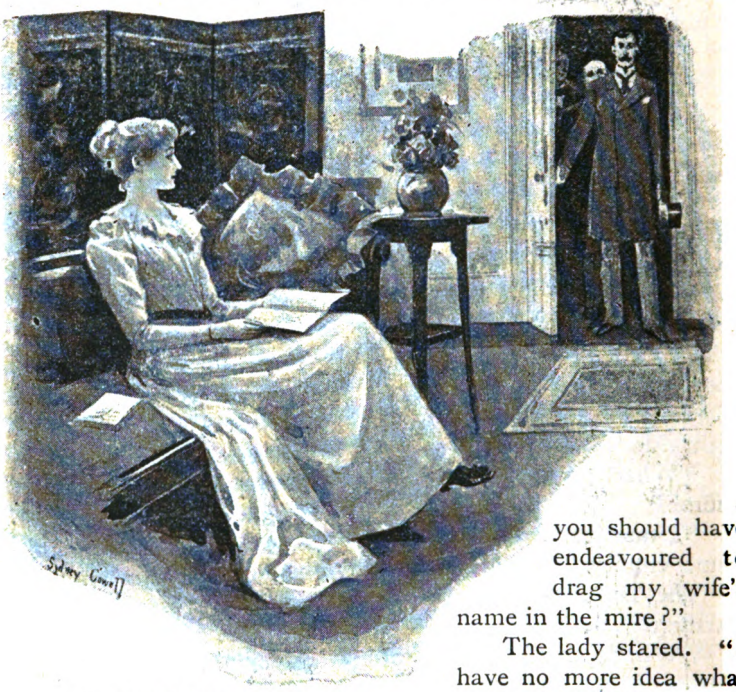
"Whatever brings you here?"

"My dear Mrs. Mansfield, I have come to ask you what you think of Mr. Kesteeven's necklace."

"Harold, what *do* you mean?"

The Duke's manner changed from jest to earnest.

"Rather, Gertrude, what do you mean? What have I done that deserved such a return from you? What have I done to you that you should have endeavoured to drag my wife's name in the mire?"



"CONTAINED A PRETTY OCCUPANT."

The lady stared. "I have no more idea what you are talking about than the man in the moon!"

"You dare to tell me so, in the presence of these men?"

"In the presence of what men?"

"In the presence of your victims—of Mr. Ruby and of Mr. Golden?"

Mr. Golden advanced a step or two.

"Excuse me, your Grace—this is not the lady."

"Eh?"

"This is not the lady."

"Not what lady?"

"This is not the lady who called herself the Duchess of Datchet."

"What the dickens do you mean? Really, Mr. Ruby and Mr. Golden, you seem to be leading me a pretty fine wild goose chase—a pretty fine wild goose chase! I know it will end in kicking—someone. You told me that the person to whom I had given that cheque was the person who had bestowed on you her patronage. This is the person to whom I gave that cheque."

"This is not the person who gave that cheque to us."

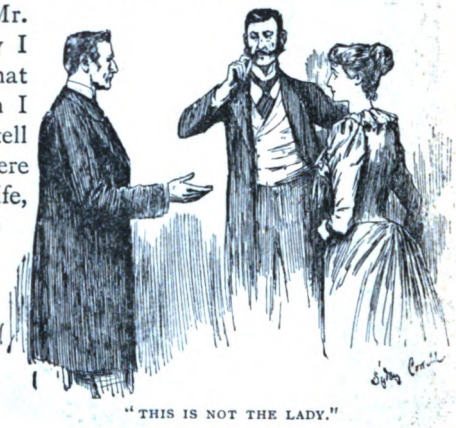
"Then—then who the devil did?"

"That, your Grace, is the point—will this lady allow me to ask her one or two questions?"

"Fire away—ask fifty!"

The lady thus referred to interposed, "This gentleman may ask fifty or five hundred questions, but unless you tell me what all this is about I very much doubt if I shall answer one."

"Let me manage it, Mr. Golden. Mrs. Mansfield, may I enquire what you did with that cheque for a thousand which I gave you? You jade! To tell me that Ruby and Golden were dunning you out of your life, when you never owed them a stiver! Tell me what you did with that cheque!"



"THIS IS NOT THE LADY."

The Duke seemed at last to have said something which had reached the lady's understanding. She changed colour. She pressed her lips together. She looked at him with defiance in her eyes. A considerable pause ensued before she spoke.

"I don't know why I should tell you. What does it matter to you what I did with it—you gave it me."

"It does matter to me. As it happens, it matters also to you. If you will take my friendly advice, you will tell me what you did with that cheque."

The look of defiance about the lady's lips and in her eyes increased.

"I don't mind telling you. Why should I? It was my own. I gave it to Alfred."

The Duke emitted an ejaculation—which smacked of profanity.

"To Alfred? And, pray, who may Alfred be?"

The lady's crest rose higher. "Alfred is—is the man to whom I am engaged to be married."

The Duke of Datchet whistled. "And you got a cheque out of me for a thousand pounds to make a present of it to your intended? That beats everything; and pray to whom did Alfred give it?"

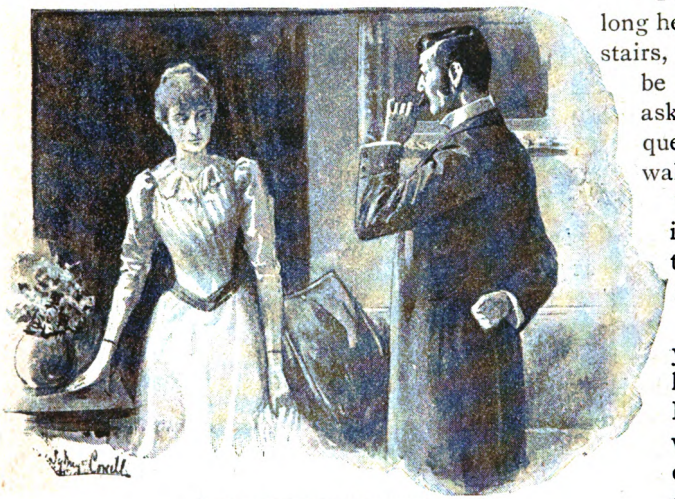
"He gave it to no one. He paid it into the bank. He told me so himself."

"Then I'm afraid that Alfred lied. Where is Alfred?"

"He's—he's here."

"Here? In this room? Where? Under the couch, or behind the screen?"

"I mean that he's in this house. He's downstairs."



"AND, PRAY, WHO MAY ALFRED BE?"

"I won't ask how long he's been downstairs, but would it be too much to ask you to request Alfred to walk upstairs."

The lady burst into a sudden tempest of tears.

"I know you'll only laugh at me—I know you well enough to expect you to do that—but—I—I know I've not been a good woman, and—and I do love him—although—he's only—a—servant!"

"A servant! Gertrude! Was that the man who opened the door?"

Mr. Golden gave vent to an exclamation which positively amounted to a shout. "By Jove!—I've got it!—I knew I'd seen the face before—I couldn't make out where—it was the man who opened the door. Your Grace, might I ask you to have that man who opened the door to us at once brought here?"

"Ring the bell, Mr. Golden."

The lady interposed. "You shan't—I won't have it! What do you want with him?"

"We wish to ask him one or two questions. If Alfred is an honest man it will be better for him that he should have an opportunity of answering them. If he is not an honest man, it will be better for you that you should know it."

Apparently this reasoning prevailed. Mr. Golden rang the bell; but his ring was not by any means immediately attended to. He rang a second and a third time, but still no answer came.

"It strikes me," suggested the Duke, "that we had better start on a voyage of discovery, and search for Alfred in the regions down below."

Before the Duke's suggestion could be acted on the door was opened—not by Alfred; not by a man at all, but by a maid.

"Send Alfred here."

"I can't find him anywhere. I think he must have gone."

"Gone!" gasped Mrs. Mansfield. "Where?"

"I don't know, ma'am. I've been up to his room to look for him, and it is all anyhow, and there's no one there. If you please, ma'am, I found this on the mat outside the door."

The maid held out an envelope. The Duke of Datchet took it from her hand. He glanced at its superscription.

"'Messrs. Ruby and Golden.'" Gentlemen, this is for you."

He transferred it to Mr. Golden. It was a long blue envelope. The maid had picked it up from the mat which was outside the door of that very room in which they were standing. Mr. Golden opened it. It contained an oblong card of considerable size, on which were printed three photographs, in a sort of series. The first photograph was that of a young man—a beautiful young man—unmistakably "Alfred." The second was that of "Alfred" with his hair arranged in a fashion which was peculiarly feminine. The third was that of "Alfred" with a bonnet and a veil on, and a very nice-looking young woman he made. At the bottom of the card was written, in a fine, delicate, lady's handwriting, "With the Duchess of Datchet's compliments."

"I knew," gasped Mrs. Mansfield, in the midst of her sorrow, "that he was very good at dressing up as a woman, but I never thought he would do this!"

* * * * *

The Duke of Datchet paid for the diamonds.

The King of Schnorrers.

By I. Zangwill.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.

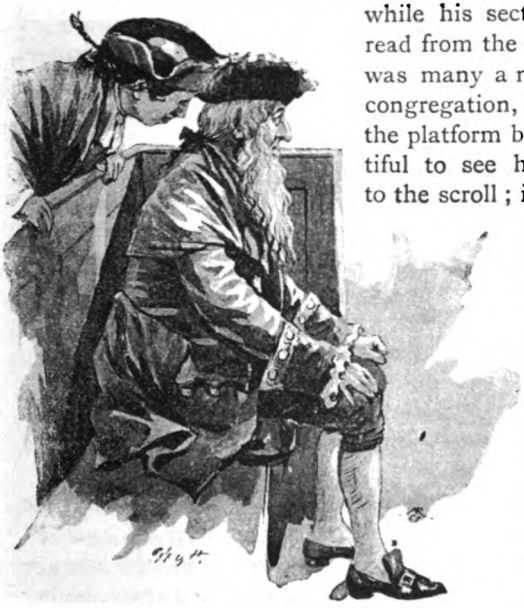
CHAPTER VI.

Shewing how the King enriched the Synagogue.

THE Synagogue of the Gate of Heaven was crowded—members, orphan boys, *Schnorrers*, all were met in celebration of the Sabbath. But the President of the Mahamad was missing. He was still inconvenienced by the effects of his stroke, and deemed it most prudent to pray at home. The Council of Five had not met since Manasseh had dissolved it, and so the matter of his daughter's marriage was left hanging, as indeed was not seldom the posture of matters discussed by Sephardic bodies. The authorities thus passive, Manasseh found scant difficulty in imposing his will upon the minor officers, less ready than himself with constitutional precedent. His daughter was to be married under the Sephardic canopy, and no jot of synagogual honour was to be bated the bridegroom. On this Sabbath—the last before the wedding—Yankele was to be called to the Reading of the Law like a true-born Portuguese. He made his first appearance in the Synagogue of his bride's fathers with a feeling of solemn respect, not exactly due to Manasseh's grandiose references to the ancient temple. He had walked the courtyard with levity, half prepared, from previous experience of his intended father-in-law, to find the glories insubstantial. Their unexpected actuality awed him, and he was glad he was dressed in his best. His beaver hat, green trousers, and brown coat equalled him with the massive pillars, the gleaming candelabra, and the stately roof. Da Costa, for his part, had made no change in his attire; he dignified his shabby vestments, stuffing them with royal manhood, and wearing his snuff-coloured over-garment like a purple robe. There was, in sooth, an official air about his habiliment, and to the worshippers it was as impressively familiar as the black stole and white bands of the Cantor. It seemed only natural that he should be called to the Reading first, quite apart from the

fact that he was a *Cohen*, of the family of Aaron, the High Priest, a descent that, perhaps, lent something to the loftiness of his carriage.

When the Minister intoned vigorously, "The good name, Manasseh, the son of Judah, the Priest, the man, shall arise to read in the Law," every eye was turned with a new interest on the prospective father-in-law. Manasseh arose composedly, and, hitching his sliding prayer-shawl over his left shoulder, stalked to the central platform, where he chanted the blessings with imposing flourishes, and stood at the Minister's right hand while his section of the Law was read from the sacred scroll. There was many a man of figure in the congregation, but none who became the platform better. It was beautiful to see him pay his respects to the scroll; it reminded one of the meeting of two sovereigns. The great moment, however, was when, the section being concluded, the Master Reader announced Manasseh's donations to the Synagogue. The financial statement was incorporated in a long Benediction, like a coin wrapped up in folds of paper. This was always a great moment, even when inconsiderable personalities were concerned, each man's generosity being the subject of speculation before and comment after. Manasseh, it was felt, would, although a mere *Schnorrer*, rise to the height of the occasion, and offer as much as seven and sixpence. The shrewder sort suspected he would split it up into two or three separate offerings, to give an air of inexhaustible largess.



"'I DIDN'T CATCH.'"

The shrewder sort were right and wrong, as is their habit.

The Master Reader began his quaint formula, "May He who blessed our Fathers," pausing at the point where the

Hebrew is blank for the amount. He span out the prefatory "Who vows"—the last note prolonging itself, like the vibration of a tuning-fork, at a literal pitch of suspense. It was a sensational halt, due to his forgetting the amounts or demanding corroboration at the eleventh hour, and the stingy often recklessly amended their contributions, panic-struck under the pressure of imminent publicity.

"Who vows——" The congregation hung upon his lips. With his usual gesture of interrogation, he inclined his ear towards Manasseh's mouth, his face wearing an unusual look of perplexity; and those nearest the platform were aware of a little colloquy between the *Schnorrer* and the Master Reader, the latter bewildered and agitated, the former stately. The delay had discomposed the Master as much as it had whetted the curiosity of the congregation. He repeated:

"Who vows—*cinco livras*"—he went on glibly without a pause—"for charity—for the life of Yankov ben Yitzchok, his son-in-law, &c., &c." But few of the worshippers heard any more than the *cinco livras* (five pounds). A thrill ran through the building. Men pricked up their ears, incredulous, whispering one another. One man deliberately moved from his place towards the box in which sat the Chief of the Elders, the presiding dignitary in the absence of the President of the Mahamad.

"I didn't catch—how much was that?" he asked.

"Five pounds," said the Chief of the Elders shortly. He suspected an irreverent irony in the Beggar's contribution.

The Benediction came to an end, but ere the hearers had time to realise the fact the Master Reader had started on another. "May He who blessed our fathers!" he began, in the strange traditional recitative. The wave of curiosity mounted again, higher than before.

"Who vows——"

The wave hung an instant, poised and motionless.

"*Cinco livras!*"

The wave broke in a low murmur, amid which the Master imperturbably proceeded, "For oil—for the life of his daughter Deborah, &c." When he reached the end there was a poignant silence.

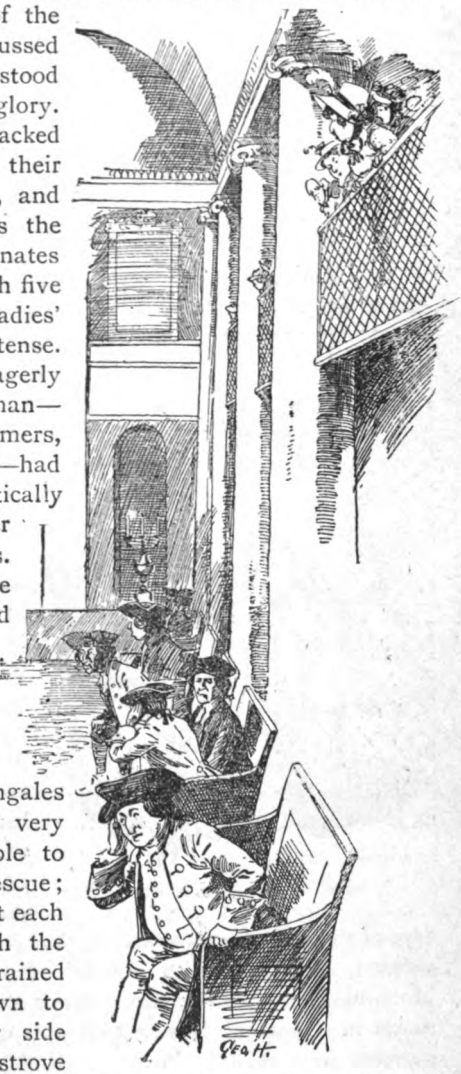
Was it to be *da capo* again?

"May He who blessed our fathers!"

The wave of curiosity surged once more, rising and subsiding with this ebb and flow of financial Benediction.

"Who vows—*cinco livras*—for the wax candles."

This time the thrill, the whisper, the flutter, swelled into a positive buzz. The gaze of the entire congregation was focussed upon the Beggar, who stood impassive in the blaze of glory. Even the orphan boys, packed in their pew, paused in their inattention to the Service, and craned their necks towards the platform. The veriest magnates did not thus play piety with five pound points. In the ladies' gallery the excitement was intense. The occupants gazed eagerly through the grille. One woman—a buxom dame of forty summers, richly clad and jewelled—had risen, and was tiptoeing frantically over the woodwork, her feather waving like a signal of distress. It was Manasseh's wife. The waste of money maddened her, each donation hit her like a poisoned arrow; vainly she strove to catch her spouse's eye. The air seemed full of gowns and toques and farthingales flaming away under her very nose, without her being able to move hand or foot in rescue; whole wardrobes perished at each Benediction. It was with the utmost difficulty she restrained herself from shouting down to her prodigal lord. At her side the radiant Deborah vainly strove to pacify her by assurances that Manasseh never intended to pay up.



"SHE STROVE TO CATCH HER SPOUSE'S EYE."

"Who vows——" The Benediction had begun for a fourth time.

"*Cinco livras* for the Holy Land." And the sensation grew. "For the life of this holy congregation, &c."

The Master Reader's voice droned on impassively, interminably.

The fourth Benediction was drawing to its close, when the beadle was seen to mount the platform and whisper in his ear. Only Manasseh overheard the message.

"The Chief of the Elders says you must stop. This is mere mockery. The man is a *Schnorrer*, an impudent beggar."

The beadle descended the steps, and after a moment of inaudible discussion with da Costa, the Master Reader lifted up his voice afresh.

The Chief of the Elders frowned and clenched his praying-shawl angrily. It was a fifth Benediction! But the Reader's sing-song went on, for Manasseh's wrath was nearer than the magnate's.

"MRS. DA COSTA HAD FAINTED."

"Who vows—*cinco livras*—for the Captives—for the life of the Chief of the Elders!"

The Chief bit his lip furiously at this delicate revenge; galled almost to frenzy by the aggravating foreboding that the congregation would construe his message as a solicitation of the polite attention. For it was of the amenities of the Synagogue for rich people to present these Benedictions to one another. And so the endless stream of donatives flowed on, provoking the hearers to fever pitch. The very orphan boys forgot that this prolongation of the service was retarding their breakfasts indefinitely. Every warden, dignitary and official, from the President of the Mahamad down to the very Keeper of the Bath, was honoured by name in a special Benediction, the chief of Manasseh's weekly patrons were repaid almost in kind on this unique and festive occasion. Most of the congregation kept count of the sum total, which was mounting, mounting . . . . .

Suddenly there was a confusion in the ladies' gallery, cries, a babble of tongues. The beadle hastened upstairs to impose his

authority. The rumour circulated that Mrs. da Costa had fainted and been carried out. It reached Manasseh's ears, but he did not move. He stood at his post, unfaltering, donating, blessing.

"Who vows—*cinco livras*—for the life of his wife, Sarah!" And a faint sardonic smile flitted across the Beggar's face.

The oldest worshipper wondered if the record would be broken. Manasseh's benefactions were approaching thrillingly near the highest total hitherto reached by any one man upon any one occasion. Every brain was troubled by surmises. The Chief of the Elders, fuming impotently, was not alone in apprehending a blasphemous mockery; but the bulk imagined that the *Schnorrer* had come into property or had always been a man of substance, and was now taking this means of restoring to the Synagogue the funds he had drawn from it. And the fountain of Benevolence played on.

The record figure was reached and left in the rear. When at length the poor Master Reader, sick unto death of the oft-repeated formula (which might just as well have covered all the contributions the first time, though Manasseh had commanded each new Benediction as if by an after-thought), was allowed to summon the Levite who succeeded Manasseh, the Synagogue had been enriched by a hundred pounds. The last Benediction had been coupled with the name of the poorest *Schnorrer* present—an assertion and glorification of Manasseh's own order that put the coping-stone on this sensational memorial of the Royal Wedding. It was, indeed, a kingly munificence, a sovereign graciousness. Nay, before the Service was over, Manasseh even begged the Chief of the Elders to permit a special *Rogation* to be said for a sick person. The Chief, meanly snatching at this opportunity of reprisals, refused, till, learning that Manasseh alluded to the ailing President of the Mahamad, he collapsed ingloriously.

But the real hero of the day was Yankele, who shone chiefly by reflected light, but yet shone even more brilliantly than the Spaniard, for to him was added the double lustre of the bridegroom and the stranger, and he was the cause and centre of the sensation.

His eyes twinkled continuously throughout.

The next day, Manasseh fared forth to collect the hundred pounds!

The day being Sunday, he looked to find most of his clients at home. He took Grobstock first as being nearest, but the worthy speculator and East India Director espied him from an

upper window, and escaped by a back-door into Goodman's Fields—a prudent measure, seeing that the incredulous Manasseh ransacked the house in quest of him. Manasseh's manner was always a search-warrant.

The King consoled himself by paying his next visit to a personage who could not possibly evade him—none other than the sick President of the Mahamad. He lived in Devonshire Square, in solitary splendour. Him Manasseh bearded in his library, where the convalescent was sorting his collection of prints. The visitor had had himself announced as a gentleman on synagogual matters, and the public-spirited President had not refused himself to the business. But when he caught sight of Manasseh, his puffy features were distorted, he breathed painfully, and put his hand to his hip.

"You!" he gasped.

"Have a care, my dear sir! Have a care!" said Manasseh anxiously, as he seated himself. "You are still weak. To come to the point—for I would not care to distract too much a man indispensable to the community, who has already felt the hand of the Almighty for his treatment of the poor——"

He saw that his words were having effect, for these prosperous pillars of the Synagogue were mightily superstitious under affliction, and he proceeded in gentler tones. "To come to the point, it is my duty to inform you (for I am the only man who is certain of it) that while you have been away our Synagogue has made a bad debt!"

"A bad debt!" An angry light leapt into the President's eyes. There had been an ancient practice of lending out the funds to members, and the President had always set his face against the survival of the policy. "It would not have been made had I been there!" he cried.

"No, indeed," admitted Manasseh. "You would have stopped it in its early stages. The Chief of the Elders tried, but failed."

"The dolt!" cried the President. "A man without a backbone. How much is it?"

"A hundred pounds!"

"A hundred pounds!" echoed the President, seriously concerned at this blot upon his year of office. "And who is the debtor?"

"I am."

"You! You have borrowed a hundred pounds, you—you jackanapes!"

"Silence, sir! How dare you? I should leave this apartment at once, were it not that I cannot go without your apology. Never in my life have I borrowed a hundred pounds—nay, never have I borrowed one farthing. I am no borrower. If you are a gentleman, you will apologise!"

"I am sorry if I misunderstood," murmured the poor President, "but how, then, do you owe the money?"

"How, then?" repeated Manasseh impatiently. "Cannot you understand that I have donated it to the Synagogue?"

The President stared at him open-mouthed.

"I vowed it yesterday in celebration of my daughter's marriage."

The President let a sigh of relief pass through his open mouth. He was even amused a little.

"Oh, is that all? It was like your deuced effrontery; but still, the Synagogue doesn't lose anything. There's no harm done."

"What is that you say?' enquired Manasseh sternly. "Do you mean to say I am not to pay this money?"

"How can you?"

"How can I? I come to you and others like you to pay it for me."

"Nonsense! Nonsense!" said the President, beginning to lose his temper again. "We'll let it pass. There's no harm done."

"HIS EYES TWINKLED."

"And this is the President of the Mahamad!" soliloquised the *Schnorrer* in bitter astonishment. "This is the chief of our ancient, godly Council! What, sir! Do you hold words spoken solemnly in Synagogue of no account? Would you have me break my solemn vow? Do you wish to bring the Synagogue institutions into contempt? Do you—a man already once stricken by Heaven—invite its chastisement again?"

The President had grown pale—his brain was reeling.

"Nay, ask its forgiveness, sir," went on the King implacably; "and make good this debt of mine in token of your remorse; as it is written, 'And repentance, and prayer, and *charity* avert the evil decree.'"

"Not a penny!" cried the President with a last gleam of lucidity, and strode furiously towards the bell-pull. Then he stood still in sudden recollection of a similar scene in the Council Chamber.

"You need not trouble to ring for a stroke," said Manasseh grimly. "Then the Synagogue is to be profaned, then even the Benediction which I in all loyalty and forgiveness caused to be said for the recovery of the President of the Mahamad is to be null, a mockery in the sight of the Holy One, blessed be He!"

The President tottered into his reading-chair.

"How much did you vow on my behalf?"

"Five pounds."

The President precipitately drew out a pocket-book and extracted a crisp Bank of England note.

"Give it to the Chancellor," he breathed, exhausted.

"I am punished," quoth Manasseh plaintively as he placed it in his bosom. "I should have vowed ten for you." And he bowed himself out.

In like manner did he collect other contributions that day from Sephardic celebrities, pointing out that now a foreign Jew—Yankele to wit—had been admitted to their communion, it behoved them to show themselves at their best. What a bad effect it would have on Yankele if a Sephardi was seen to vow with impunity! First impressions were everything, and they could not be too careful. It would not do for Yankele to circulate contumelious reports of them among his kin. Those who remonstrated with him over his extravagance he reminded that he had only one daughter, and he drew their attention to the favourable influence his example had had on the Saturday receipts. Not a man of those who came after him in the Reading had ventured to offer half-crowns. He had fixed the standard in gold for that day at least, and who knew what noble emulation he had fired for the future.

Every man who yielded to Manasseh's eloquence was a step to reach the next, for Manasseh made a list of donors, and paraded it reproachfully before those who had yet to give. Withal, the most obstinate resistance met him in some quarters. One man—a certain Rodriques, inhabiting a mansion in Finsbury Square—was positively rude.

"If I came in a carriage, you'd soon pull out your ten-pound note for the Synagogue," sneered Manasseh, his blood boiling.

"Certainly I would," admitted Rodriques laughing. And Manasseh shook off the dust of his threshold in disdain.

By reason of such rebuffs, his collection for the day only reached about thirty pounds, inclusive of the value of some depreciated Portuguese bonds which he good-naturedly accepted as though at par.

Disgusted with the meanness of mankind, da Costa's genius devised more drastic measures. Having carefully locked up the proceeds of Sunday's operations, and, indeed, nearly all his loose cash, in his safe, for, to avoid being put to expense, he rarely carried money on his person, unless he gathered it *en route*, he took his way to Bishopsgate Within, to catch the stage for Clapton. The day was bright, and he hummed a festive Synagogue tune as he plodded leisurely with his stick along the bustling, narrow pavements, bordered by costers' barrows at one edge, and by jagged houses, overhung by grotesque signboards, at the other, and thronged by cits in worsted hose.

"SORTING HIS COLLECTION OF PRINTS."

But when he arrived at the inn he found the coach had started. Nothing concerned, he ordered a post-chaise in a supercilious manner, criticising the horses, and drove to Clapton in style, drawn by a pair of spanking steeds, to the music of the postillion's horn. Very soon they drew out of the blocked roads, with their lumbering procession of carts, coaches, and chairs, and into open country, green with the fresh verdure of the spring. The chaise stopped at "The Red Cottage," a pretty villa, whose façade was covered with Virginian creeper that blushed in the autumn. Manasseh was surprised at the taste with which the lawn was laid out in the Italian style, with grottoes and marble figures. The householder, hearing the windings of the horn, conceived himself visited by a person of quality, and sent a message that he was in the hands of his hairdresser, but would be down in less

than half an hour. This was of a piece with Manasseh's information concerning the man—a certain Belasco, emulous of the great fops, an amateur of satin waistcoats and novel shoestrings, and even said to affect a spying-glass when he showed at Vauxhall. Manasseh had never seen him, not having troubled to go so far afield, but from the handsome appurtenances of the hall and the staircase he augured the best. The apartments were even more to his liking; they were oak panelled, and crammed with the most expensive objects of art and luxury. The walls of the drawing-room were frescoed, and from the ceiling depended a brilliant lustre, with seven spouts for illumination.

Having sufficiently examined the furniture, Manasseh grew weary of waiting, and betook himself to Belasco's bedchamber.

"You will excuse me, Mr. Belasco," he said, as he entered through the half open door, "but my business is urgent."

The young dandy, who was seated before a mirror, did not look up, but replied, "Have a care, sir, you well nigh startled my hairdresser."

"Far be it from me to willingly discompose an artist," replied Manasseh drily, "though from the elegance of the design, I venture to think my interruption will not make a hair's-breadth of difference. But I come on a matter which the son of Benjamin Belasco will hardly deny is more pressing than his toilette."

"Nay, nay, sir, what can be more momentous?"

"The Synagogue!" said Manasseh austerely.

"Pah! What are you talking of, sir?" and he looked up cautiously for the first time at the picturesque figure. "What does the Synagogue want of me? I pay my *finta* and every bill the rascals send me. Monstrous fine sums, too, egad——"

"But you never go there!"

"No, indeed, a man of fashion cannot be everywhere. Routs and rigotti play the deuce with one's time."

"What a pity!" mused Manasseh ironically. "One misses you there. 'Tis no edifying spectacle—a slovenly rabble with none to set the standard of taste."

The pale-faced beau's eyes lit up with a gleam of interest.

"Ah, the clods!" he said. "You should yourself be a buck of the eccentric school by your dress. But I stick to the old tradition of elegance."

"You had better stick to the old tradition of piety," quoth Manasseh. "Your father was a saint, you are a sinner in Israel. Return to the Synagogue, and herald your return by contributing

to its finances. It has made a bad debt, and I am collecting money to reimburse it."

The young exquisite yawned. "I know not who you may be," he said at length, "but you are evidently not one of us. As for the Synagogue I am willing to reform its dress, but dem'd if I will give a shilling more to its finances. Let your slovenly rabble of tradesmen pay the piper—I cannot afford it!"

"*You* cannot afford it!"

"No—you see I have such extravagant tastes."

"But I give you the opportunity for extravagance," expostulated Manasseh. "What greater luxury is there than that of doing good?"

"'FAREWELL!' HE HISSED."

"Confound it, sir, I must ask you to go," said Beau Belasco coldly. "Do you not perceive that you are disconcerting my hairdresser?"

"I could not abide a moment longer under this profane, it tasteful, roof," said Manasseh, backing sternly towards the door. "But I would make one last appeal to you, for the sake of the repose of your father's soul, to forsake your evil ways."

"Be hanged to you for a meddler," retorted the young blood. "My money supports men of genius and taste—it shall not be frittered away on a pack of fusty shopkeepers."

The *Schnorrer* drew himself up to his full height, his eyes darted fire. "Farewell, then!" he hissed in terrible tones. "*You will make the third at Grace!*"

He vanished—the dandy started up full of vague alarm, forgetting even his hair in the mysterious menace of that terrifying sibilation.

"What do you mean?" he cried.

"I mean," said Manasseh, reappearing at the door, "that since the world was created, only two men have taken their clothes with them to the world to come. One was Korah, who was swallowed down, the other was Elijah, who was borne aloft. It is patent in which direction the third will go."

The sleeping chord of superstition vibrated under Manasseh's dexterous touch.

"Rejoice, O young man, in your strength," went on the Beggar, "but a day will come when only the corpse-watchers will perform your toilette. In plain white they will dress you, and the devil shall never know what a dandy you were."

"But who are you, that I should give you money for the Synagogue?" asked the Beau sullenly. "Where are your credentials?"

"Was it to insult me that you called me back? Do I look a knave? Nay, put up your purse. I'll have none of your filthy gold. Let me go."

Gradually Manasseh was won round to accepting ten sovereigns.

"For your father's sake," he said, pocketing them. "The only thing I will take for your sake is the cost of my conveyance. I had to post hither, and the Synagogue must not be the loser."

Beau Belasco gladly added the extra money, and reseated himself before the mirror, with agreeable sensations in his neglected conscience. "You see," he observed, half apologetically, for Manasseh still lingered, "one cannot do everything. To be a prince of dandies, one needs all one's time." He waved his hand comprehensively around the walls that were lined with wardrobes. "My buckskin breeches were the result of nine separate measurings. Do you note how they fit?"

"They scarcely do justice to your eminent reputation," replied Manasseh candidly.

Beau Belasco's face became whiter than even at the thought of earthquakes and devils. "They fit me to bursting!" he breathed.

"But are they in the pink of fashion?" queried Manasseh. "And assuredly the nankeen pantaloons yonder I recollect to have seen worn last year."

"My tailor said they were of a special cut—'tis a shape I am introducing, baggy—to go with frilled shirts."

Manasseh shook his head sceptically, whereupon the Beau besought him to go through his wardrobe, and set aside anything that lacked originality or extreme fashionableness. After considerable reluctance Manasseh consented, and set aside a few cravats, shirts, periwigs, and suits from the immense collection.

"Aha! That is all you can find," said the Beau gleefully.

"Yes, that is all," said Manasseh sadly. "All I can find that does any justice to your fame. These speak the man of polish and invention; the rest are but tawdry frippery. Anybody might wear them."

"Anybody!" gasped the poor Beau, stricken to the soul.

"Yes, I might wear them myself."

"Thank you! Thank you! You are an honest man. I love true criticism, when the critic has nothing to gain. I am delighted you called. These rags shall go to my valet."

"Nay, why waste them on the heathen?" asked Manasseh, struck with a sudden thought. "Let me dispose of them for the benefit of the Synagogue."

"If it would not be troubling you too much!"

"Is there anything I would not do for Heaven?" said Manasseh with a patronising air. He threw open the door of the adjoining piece suddenly, disclosing the scowling valet on his knees. "Take these down, my man," he said quietly, and the valet was only too glad to hide his confusion at being caught eavesdropping by hastening down to the drive with an armful of satin waistcoats.

"THE SCOWLING VALET ON HIS KNEES."

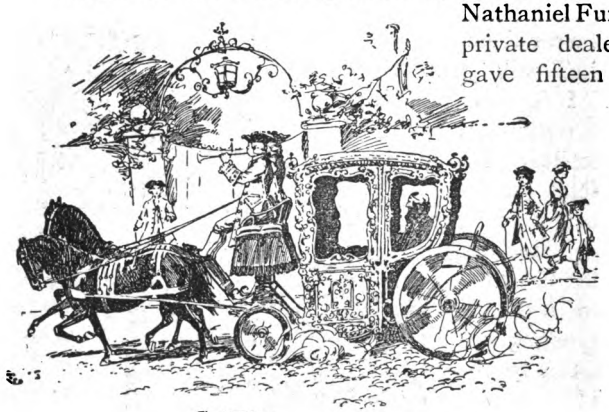
Manasseh, getting together the remainder, shook his head despairingly. "I shall never get these into the post-chaise," he said. "You will have to lend me your carriage."

"Can't you come back for them?" said the Beau feebly.

"Why waste the Synagogue's money on hired vehicles? No,

if you will crown your kindness by sending the footman along with me to help me unpack them, you shall have your equipage back in an hour or two."

So the carriage and pair were brought out, and Manasseh, pressing into his service the coachman, the valet, and the footman, superintended the packing of the bulk of Beau Belasco's wardrobe into the two vehicles. Then he took his seat in the carriage, the coachman and the gorgeous powdered footman got into their places, and with a joyous fanfaronade on the horn, the procession set off, Manasseh bowing graciously to the master of "The Red House," who was waving his beruffled hand from a window embowered in greenery. After a pleasant drive, the vehicles halted at the house, guarded by stone lions, in which dwelt Nathaniel Furtado, the wealthy private dealer, who willingly gave fifteen pounds for the buck's belaced and embroidered vestments, besides being inveigled into a donation of a guinea towards the Synagogue's bad debt. Manasseh thereupon dismissed the chaise with a handsome gratuity, and drove in state in the now-empty carriage, attended by the powdered footman, to Finsbury Square, to the mansion of Rodriques. "I have come for my ten pounds," he said, and reminded him of his promise (?) Rodriques laughed, and swore, and laughed again, and swore that the carriage was hired, to be paid for out of the ten pounds.



"DROVE IN STYLE."

"Hired?" echoed Manasseh resentfully. "Do you not recognise the arms of my friend, Beau Belasco?" And he presently drove off with the note, for Rodriques had a roguish eye. And then, parting with the chariot, the King took his way on foot to Fenchurch Street, to the house of his cousin Barzillai, the ex-planter of Barbadoes, and now a West Indian merchant.

Barzillai, fearing humiliation before his clerks, always carried

his relative off to the neighbouring Franco's Head Tavern, and humoured him with costly liquors.

"But you had no right to donate money you did not possess; it was dishonest," he cried with irrepressible ire.

"Hoity toity!" said Manasseh, setting down his glass so vehemently that the stem shivered. "And were you not called to the Law after me? And did you not donate money?"

"Certainly! But I *had* the money."

"What! *With* you?"

"No, no, certainly not. I do not carry money on the Sabbath."

"Exactly. Neither do I."

"But the money was at my bankers."

"And so it was at mine. *You* are my bankers, you and others like you. You draw on your bankers—I draw on mine." And his cousin being thus confuted, Manasseh had not much further difficulty in wheedling two pounds ten out of him.

"And now," said he, "I really think you ought to do something to lessen the Synagogue's loss."

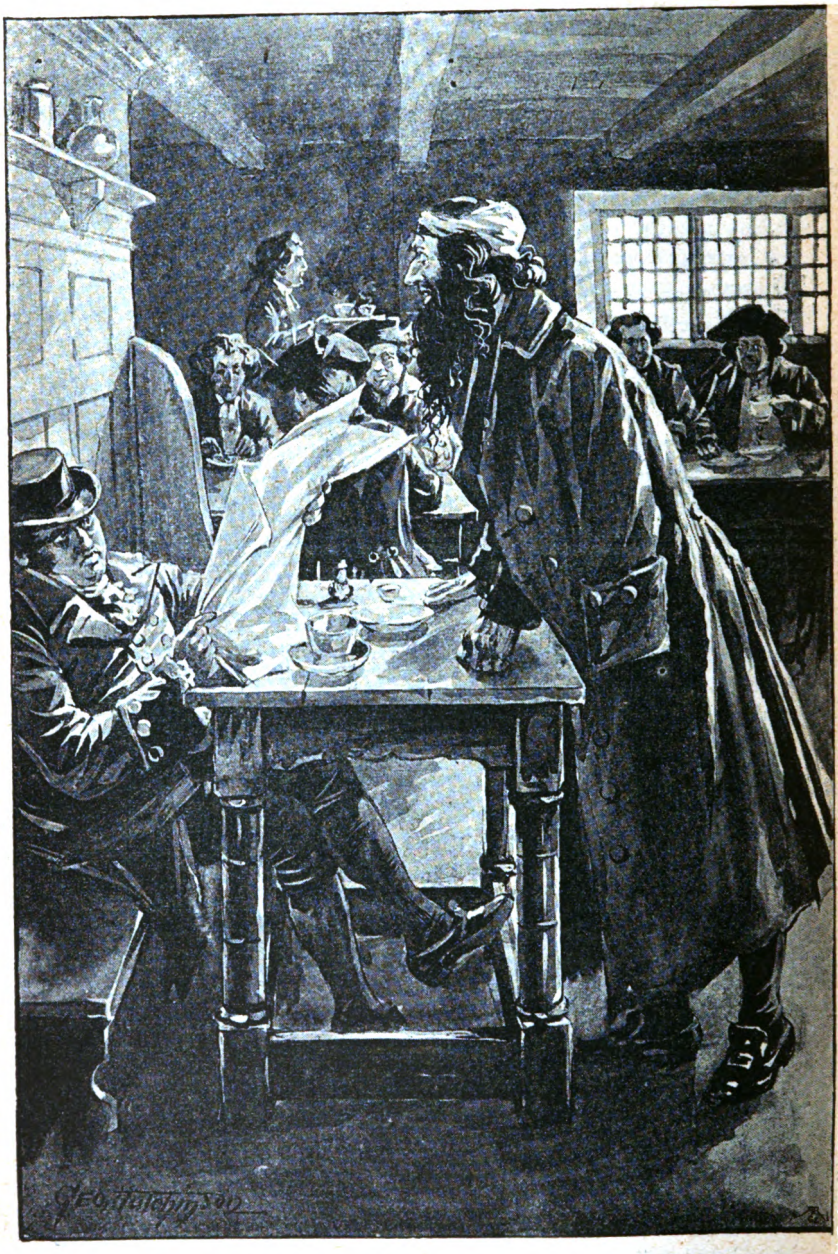
"But I have just given!" quoth Barzillai in bewilderment.

"*That* you gave to me as your cousin, to enable your relative to discharge his obligations. I put it strictly on a personal footing. But now I am pleading on behalf of the Synagogue, which stands to lose heavily. You are a Sephardi as well as my cousin. It is a distinction not unlike the one I have so often to explain to you. You owe me charity, not only as a cousin, but as a *Schnorrer* likewise." And, having wrested another guinea from the obfuscated merchant, he repaired to Grobstock's business office in search of the defaulter.

But the wily Grobstock, forewarned by Manasseh's promise to visit him, had denied himself to the *Schnorrer* or anyone remotely resembling him, and it was not till the afternoon that Manasseh ran him to earth at Jonathan's coffee-house in Exchange Alley, where the brokers foregathered, and 'prentices and students swaggered in to abuse the Ministers, and all kinds of men from bloods to barristers loitered to pick up hints to easy riches. Manasseh detected his quarry in the furthermost box, his face hidden behind a broadsheet.

"Why do you always come to me?" muttered the East India Director helplessly.

"Eh?" said Manasseh, mistrustful of his own ears. "I beg your pardon."



"HIS FACE HIDDEN BEHIND A BROADSHEET."

"If your own community cannot support you," said Grobstock, more loudly, and with all the boldness of an animal driven to bay, "why not go to Abraham Goldsmid, or his brother Ben, or to Van Oven, or Oppenheim—they're all more prosperous than I."

"Sir!" said Manasseh wrathfully. "You are a skilful—nay, a famous, financier. You know what stocks to buy, what stocks to sell, when to follow a rise, and when a fall. When the Premier advertises the loans, a thousand speculators look to you for guidance. What would you say if *I* presumed to interfere in your financial affairs—if I told you to issue these shares or to call in those? You would tell me to mind my own business; and you would be perfectly right. Now *Schnorring* is *my* business. Trust me, I know best whom to come to. You stick to stocks and leave *Schnorring* alone. You are the King of Financiers, but I am the King of *Schnorrers*."

Grobstock's resentment at the rejoinder was mitigated by the compliment to his financial insight. To be put on the same level with the Beggar was indeed unexpected.

"Will you have a cup of coffee?" he said.

"I ought scarcely to drink with you after your reception of me," replied Manasseh unappeased. "It is not even as if I came to *schnorr* for myself; it is to the finances of our house of worship that I wished to give you an opportunity of contributing."

"Aha! your vaunted community hard up?" queried Joseph with a complacent twinkle.

"Sir! We are the richest congregation in the world. We want nothing from anybody," indignantly protested Manasseh, as he absent-mindedly took the cup of coffee which Grobstock had ordered for him. "The difficulty merely is that, in honour of my daughter's wedding, I have donated a hundred pounds to the Synagogue which I have not yet managed to collect, although I have already devoted a day-and-a-half of my valuable time to the purpose."

"But why do you come to me?"

"What! Do you ask me that again?"

"I—I—mean," stammered Grobstock—"why should I contribute to a Portuguese Synagogue?"

Manasseh clucked his tongue in despair of such stupidity. "It is just you who should contribute more than any Portuguese."

"I?" Grobstock wondered if he was awake.

"Yes, you. Was not the money spent in honour of the

marriage of a German Jew? It was a splendid vindication of your community."

"This is too much!" cried Grobstock, outraged and choking.

"Too much to mark the admission to our fold of the first of your sect! I am disappointed in you, deeply disappointed. I thought you would have applauded my generous behaviour."

"I don't care what you thought!" gasped Grobstock. He was genuinely exasperated at the ridiculousness of the demand, but he was also pleased to find himself preserving so staunch a front against the insidious *Schnorrer*. If he could only keep firm now, he told himself, he might emancipate himself for ever. Yes, he would be strong, and Manasseh should never dare address him again. "I won't pay a stiver!" he roared.

"If you make a scene I will withdraw;" said Manasseh quietly. "Already there are ears and eyes turned upon you. From your language people will be thinking me a dun and you a bankrupt."

"They can go to the devil!" thundered Grobstock, "and you too!"

"Blasphemer! You counsel me to ask the devil to contribute to the Synagogue! I will not bandy words with you. You refuse, then, to contribute to this fund?"

"I do, I see no reason."

"Not even the five pounds I vowed on behalf of Yankele himself—one of your own people?"

"What! I pay in honour of Yankele—a dirty *Schnorrer!*"

"Is this the way you speak of your guests?" said Manasseh, in pained astonishment. "Do you forget that Yankele has broken bread at your table? Perhaps this is how you talk of me when my back is turned. But, beware! Remember the saying of our sages, 'You and I cannot live in the world,' said God to the haughty man. Come, now! No more paltering or taking refuge in abuse. You refuse me this beggarly five pounds?"

"Most decidedly."

"Very well, then!"

Manasseh called the attendant.

"What are you about to do?" cried Grobstock apprehensively.

"You shall see," said Manasseh resolutely, and when the attendant came, he pressed the price of his cup of coffee into his hand.

Grobstock flushed in silent humiliation. Manasseh rose.

Grobstock's fatal strain of weakness gave him a twinge of compunction at the eleventh hour.

"You see for yourself how unreasonable your request was," he murmured.

"Do not strive to justify yourself, I am done with you," said Manasseh. "I am done with you as a philanthropist. As a financier, I still respect you, and may yet come to you, but as a philanthropist, never."

"Anything I can do—" muttered Grobstock vaguely.

"Let me see!" said Manasseh, looking down upon him thoughtfully. "Ah, yes, an idea! I have collected over sixty pounds. If you would invest this for me——"

"Certainly, certainly," interrupted Grobstock, with conciliatory eagerness.

"Good! With your unrivalled knowledge of the markets, you could easily bring it up to the necessary sum in a day or two. Perhaps even there is some grand *coup* on the *tapis*, something to be bulled or beared in which you have a hand."

"STRUCK THE CHANCELLOR BREATHLESS."

Grobstock nodded his head vaguely. He had already remembered that the proceeding was considerably below his dignity; he was not a stockbroker, never had he done anything of the kind for anyone.

"But suppose I lose it all?" he asked, trying to draw back.

"Impossible," said the *Schnorrer* serenely. "Do you forget it is a Synagogue fund? Do you think the Almighty will suffer His money to be lost?"

"Then why not speculate yourself?" said Grobstock craftily.

"The Almighty's honour must be guarded. What! Shall He be less well served than an earthly monarch? Do you think I do not know your financial relations with the Court? The service of the Almighty demands the best men. I was the best man

to collect the money—you are the best to invest it. To-morrow morning it shall be in your hands."

"No, don't trouble," said Grobstock feebly. "I don't need the actual money to deal with."

"I thank you for your trust in me," replied Manasseh with emotion. "Now you speak like yourself again. I withdraw what I said to you. I *will* come to you again—to the philanthropist no less than financier. And—and I am sorry I paid for my coffee." His voice quivered.

Grobstock was touched. He took out a sixpence and repaid his guest with interest. Manasseh slipped the coin into his pocket, and shortly afterwards, with some final admonitions to his stock-jobber, took his leave.

Being in for the job, Grobstock resolved to make the best of it. His latent vanity impelled him to astonish the Beggar. It happened that he *was* on the point of a magnificent manœuvre, and alongside his own triton Manasseh's minnow might just as well swim. He made the sixty odd pounds into six hundred.

A few days after the Royal Wedding, the glories of which are still a tradition among the degenerate *Schnorrers* of to-day, Manasseh struck the Chancellor breathless by handing him a bag containing five score of sovereigns. Thus did he honourably fulfil his obligation to the Synagogue, and with more celerity than many a Warden. Nay, more! Justly considering the results of the speculation should accrue to the Synagogue, whose money had been risked, he, with Quixotic scrupulousness, handed over the balance of five hundred pounds to the Mahamad, stipulating only that it should be used to purchase a life-annuity (styled the Da Costa Fund) for a poor and deserving member of the congregation, in whose selection he, as donor, should have the ruling voice. The Council of Five eagerly agreed to his conditions, and a special junta was summoned for the election. The donor's choice fell upon Manasseh Bueno Barzillai Azevedo da Costa, thenceforward universally recognised, and hereby handed down to tradition, as the King of *Schnorrers*.

[FINIS.]

Lions in Their Dens.

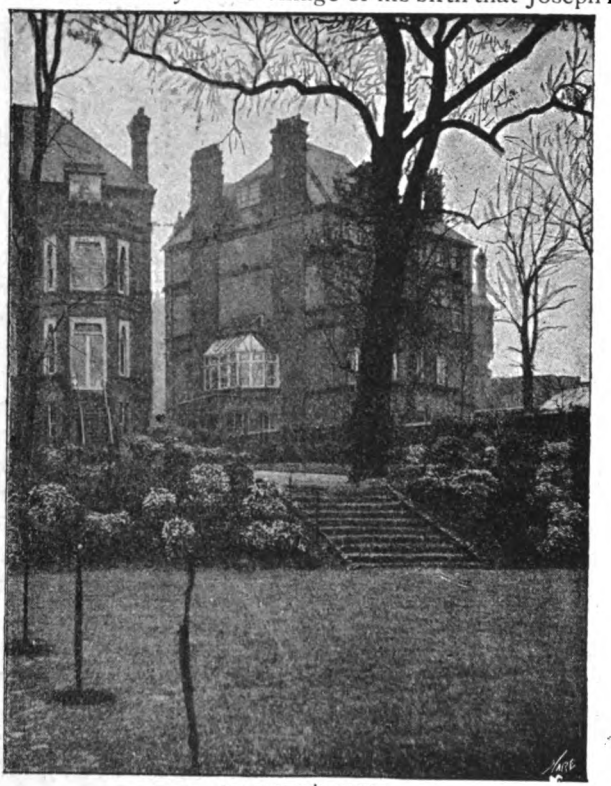
DOCTOR PARKER.

By Raymond Blathwayt.

Illustrations by Louis Gunnis.

(Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle & Young.)

DR. PARKER comes of a long line of North-country Puritans. His father—a stern, old Nonconformist, of whom he ever speaks with love and reverence—was a Northumbrian stone-cutter. It was in the little Tyneside village of his birth that Joseph himself



DR. PARKER'S HOUSE.

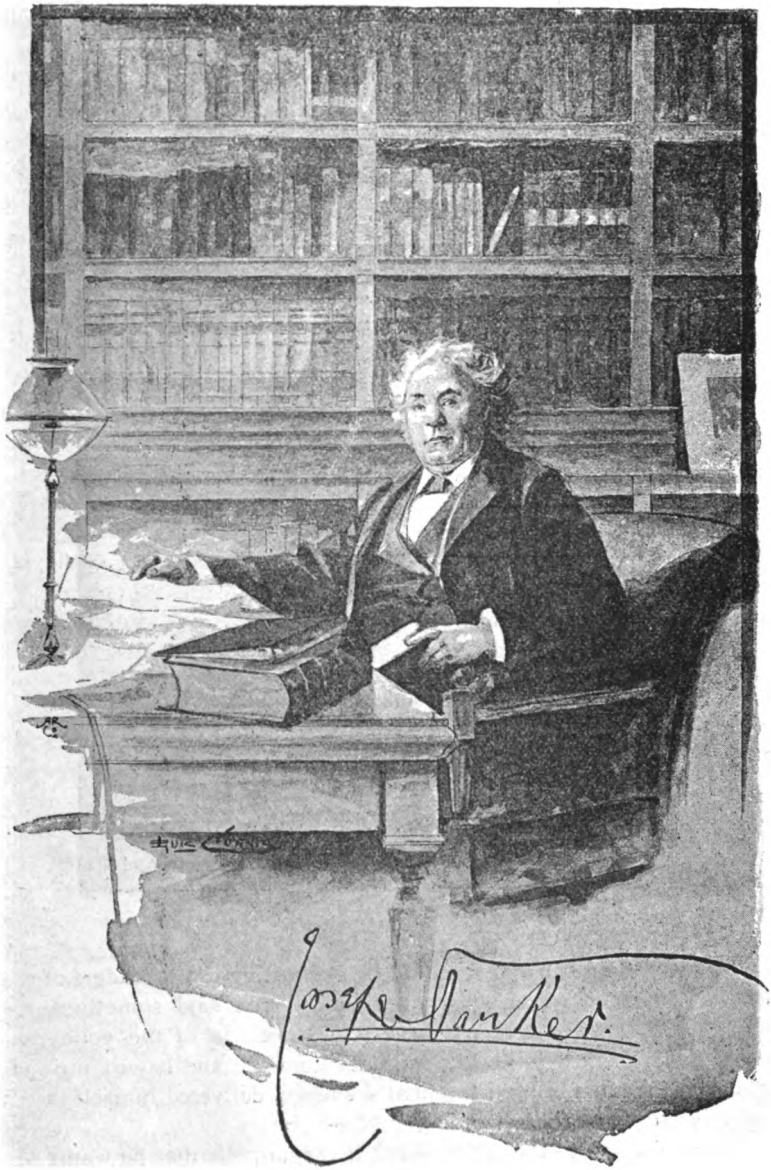
preached his first sermon—an out-door sermon. As a young minister he contended, many years ago, with the Secularists at Banbury, where he had a charge, and a doughty champion of

orthodoxy they found him to be. In Manchester, when he was minister of Cavendish Chapel, he proved in his own person the truth of the old saying, that "a house-to-house going parson makes a church-going people." In his own personality I am bound to say that he is always interesting. He is a rather tall, broad, and burly man. He has an enormous head, and a lofty forehead, from which the long grey locks fall on either side like a lion's mane; small piercing eyes gaze out upon the world from a rough-hewn and a massive, clean-shaven face. He is always dressed in black, and presents, though he himself denies it, a thoroughly respectable appearance.

"I wear a gown in the pulpit," he once said to me, "because I have the worst coat in the denomination. The gown saves a tailor's bill. I never could learn to dress myself. That sofa," he continued, pointing to a comfortable sofa which stood in the corner of the room, "is responsible for my grossly untidy condition. I write a paragraph, I lie down on the sofa and think over the next paragraph, and I jump up again, and so it is all day long."

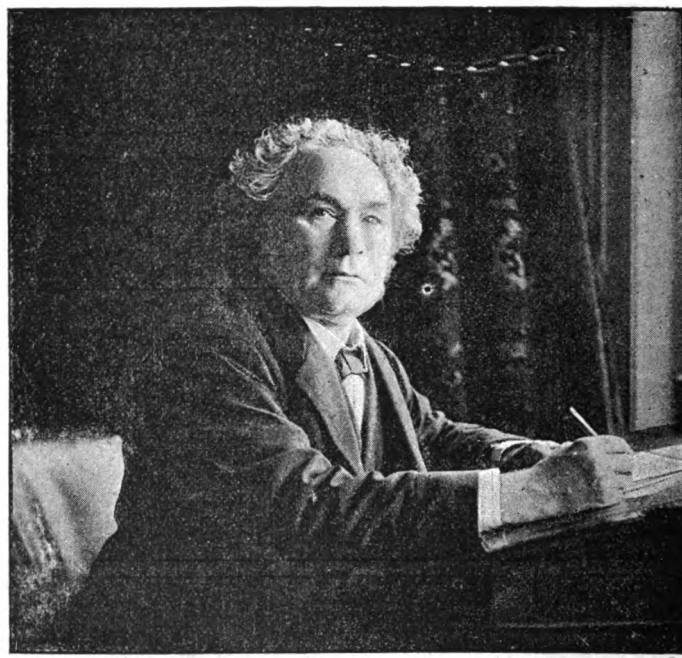
On first seeing him he gives one the idea of being a very sententious person. He affects a weighty speech, and yet it is not affectation, it is quite second nature with the man. His remarks upon the most ordinary events of life are couched in the deepest solemnity of manner and expression. A lady once asked him, "What is your hobby, Dr. Parker?" "Preaching, madam," he replied. "But I mean apart from preaching?" "There's nothing apart from preaching, it touches all life." This, said in his bass voice, would naturally frighten into silence the unfortunate person who had dared to address him so innocent a remark. Amongst his big possessions I forgot to allude to his big heart; he certainly possesses that. He is continually giving sums of money away, of which none but he and the recipient know anything whatever, and he is as free-handed with his services as he is with his purse. He never takes a farthing for preaching outside his own church. Some time ago he preached the opening sermon at a chapel in the suburbs. "Oh," said somebody who heard of it, "you paid a pretty sum for Dr. Parker's sermon, I expect, did you not? I daresay it cost you £25 at the very least." "That was the exact sum that passed between us," was the reply of the person to whom the remark was made. "And that is what you call *giving* the Gospel of Christ free to everyone that asketh for it?"

"Precisely," replied he who knew, "that is just what Parker did. He gave us the sermon, *and* he gave us the £25 too."


Joseph Jefferson

And that is Dr. Parker all over. He may at times give one the impression that he is bumptious; his personality may at times appear somewhat overwhelming, but there is not, as far as I have been able to discover, a particle of meanness in his whole composition. His is a nature absolutely generous.

"Well, Mr. Blathwayt," said he, when I went to call upon him for the purpose of this interview, "and what are we to talk about to-day?"

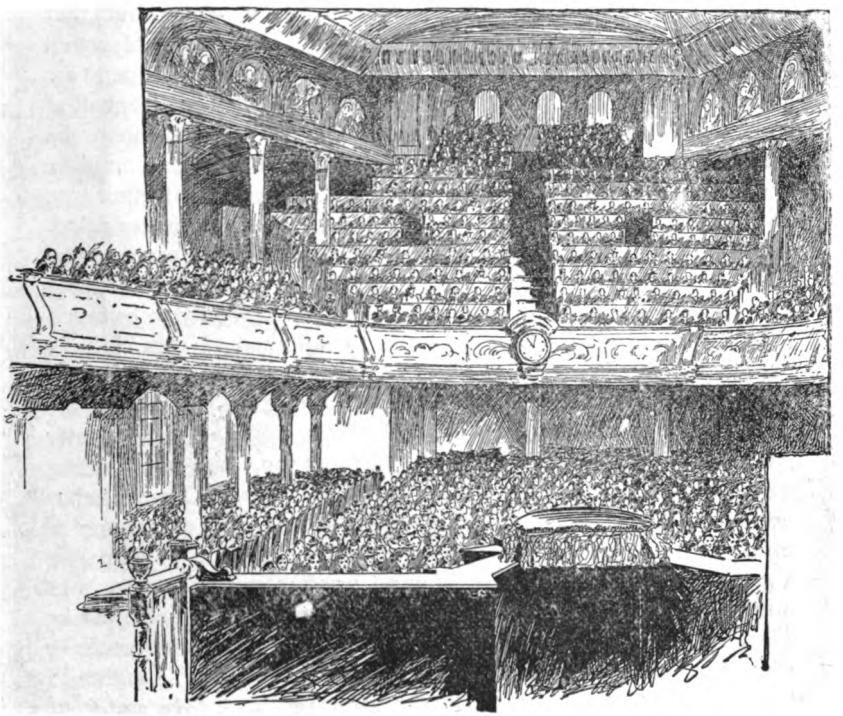


DR. PARKER AT WORK.

"I think," said I, "that it would be interesting to the readers of *The Idler*, most of whom are young men, if you said something about that Freethought which is so characteristic of the young men of the present day." The minister hummed and hawed prodigiously, and then, after a moment's silence, delivered himself in ponderous tones of these words.

"My objection to the rationalist," he began, "is that he wants to come into the argument just where *he* pleases, and I won't let him. He has to account for himself first, *who* he is, *what* he is, and *where* he has come from, what his origin is. I find him with

his cap on shaking his umbrella at the Church. Now a man to be able to do that effectually ought to have given a lifetime of study to the matter, but this is impossible. No man can have devoted long study to anything ; he sows wild oats until he is twenty-five, he is fighting for his living at forty, and at sixty he has to face the grave. No man can devote long study to anything because he is short-lived; he will know more about long study five thousand years hence. The information of to-day is the ignorance



THE CITY TEMPLE.

of to-morrow. When my friends gave me the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' I thought I was set up in knowledge for ever, but I find now that there is a new edition, and that what I thought final is now either fiction or conjecture. The true use of science is to tell you to wait for further instructions. Nothing has corrected itself so much as science. We must wait, therefore, before formulating final conclusions. As to Freethought: *what is it?* Is there any of it in arithmetic, in morality? What is this wonderful thing—Freethought? Am I not free to say that there are thirteen-

pence in the shilling? to put an end to my life? I find I am not absolutely free at any one point in personal and social life. Yet when I come into the region of religion I am told I can play the fool as much as I like. We must, therefore, have a definition of Freethought before going on with the subject. I find men have to swallow quite as many mysteries in science, and even mathematics, as in religion. What is the square root of two? Mathematicians themselves tell us that it is beyond the power of human imagination to conceive, and at the same time without that transcendental number every machine shop in the world would have to be shut up. If Moses had told us what teachers are telling us at South Kensington daily, we should have laughed at him as the most romantic fabulist that ever imposed upon the credulity of mankind. No, Mr. Blathwayt, I intend to remain by the old standards of faith: from that point I can see further into eternity than from any other point accessible to the human mind. The so-called 'Freethought' of the day is to me incomprehensible. The scientist, of all men," continued Dr. Parker, as he proceeded to classify those amongst whom Freethought is chiefly to be found at the present day—"the scientist, of all men, I should have expected to be most religious. He lives in an universe of wonders; he confesses himself that he is always coming to the end of his tether. Professor Tyndall acknowledges, poetically and justly enough, that the piano with its lilting soprano, and its growling bass, does not include the whole mystery of sound. He says that on the right and left of the instrument there may be an infinity of music. How, therefore, a scientist can be dogmatic in denial is a greater mystery to me than how a Christian can be dogmatic in affirmation: there is a cant of denial and non-dogmatism just as much as of bigotry and dogmatism. It is fashionable among those who know least about him to decry Young's 'Night Thoughts'; but I believe that the poet is right when he said, '*An undevout astronomer is mad.*' I am astounded that science has not made some critics of Christianity more modest and self-controlled. Huxley, from my point of view, is all hardness; a nature like his cannot enter into the pathos of Christianity, any more than a blind man can enter into the mystery and charm of colour. Professor Huxley is a great man, but he is not in this Christian question at all. A foot rule cannot measure the horizon, and even fifty yards of tape cannot go far in that business. I fear he is allowing himself to be so sensitive as to be really hostile to religious conviction and action. So much for the

scientists. There is the Freethought of the artisans; as to their antagonism, I believe it arises largely out of ignorance. I think they direct their antagonism against ecclesiasticism rather than against Christianity. There may be others, audacious and blatant, who take to denunciation as a species of profane swearing. I suppose some men must sometimes swear, as it is a rough and ready relief to their feelings. I believe that objurgation and prayer are not so far apart as is generally supposed. I assure you that I would welcome hostility infinitely in preference to indifference. I never regret to hear of artisans holding anti-Christian meetings in the Park or elsewhere, for so long as they are interested in the subject they may come right in the end. Give me a zealous opponent rather than a man who can fall asleep in my sermon. As to the scepticism of gentlemen, I hardly dignify it by the name of opposition: it is rather reluctance, indifference, negativeness, self-worship."

IN THE PULPIT.

"Do you make no allowance," said I, "for the honest doubt in which the poet tells us there lives more faith than in half the creeds?"

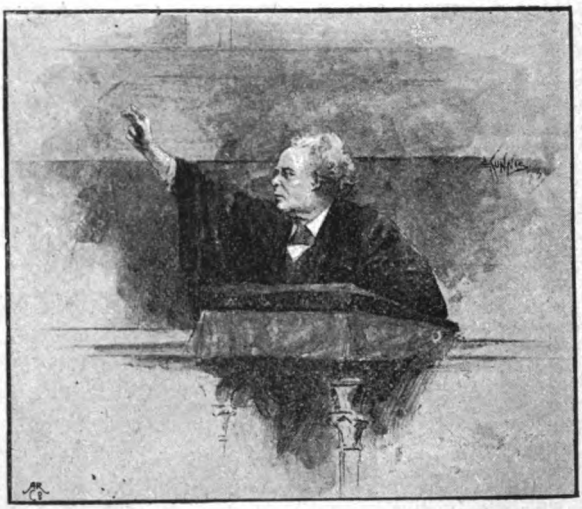
"There *is* a doubt or scepticism," he growled out, "that may be absolutely honest, but why should it not doubt *itself*? Why invest itself with a species of infallibility? Why should doubt be gingerly treated and allowed to crow out its negations, whilst faith is rebuked as a kind of audacity? When doubt doubts *itself* it is not far from the Kingdom of Heaven. When a man doubts in order to escape discipline he is a charlatan and an impostor. The word 'sceptic' really means 'question asker.' Now the first question ever asked of mankind was asked by the devil. I merely remark that as a historical fact. The devil is a voluminous

author, and the mark of interrogation is a favourite point in his literature. I don't believe in your doubters, honest or otherwise, or your Freethinkers, or your sceptics, Mr. Blathwayt," continued the minister, as he shook his shaggy grey locks fiercely at me. "Oh, yes, Dr. Parker," I replied, "that's all very well, but what is it makes many of these people take to doubting in the first place?" Dr. Parker arose from his armchair, and as he strode to the window he growled out, "Now, look here, my friend, don't you talk rubbish. Just look at the blaze of sunshine that is flooding

THE DRAWING ROOM.

the whole land at the present moment," and as he spoke he pointed to his garden, and those of his neighbours, which lay below us, bathed in the sweet sunshine. "Last December I thought that the Sun was played out, I thought of writing a short obituary notice upon him. I see now, however, that he is filling the whole sky with his glory; it was only a fog that hid his Majesty, so there are mental fogs that shut out Christ's light from the mind, and with that state of mind I can have a certain sympathy, but with the sceptic of to-day I have none. His attitude arises from

aversion rather than conviction. That is finely put in the New Testament, 'They did not like to retain God in their thoughts.' These men appeal to their common sense; they have a contempt for what they term the supernatural. Do not, for heaven's sake, suppose that there are no mysteries outside the Bible. Faith has fewer mysteries than *un*faith. The spasms, such as 'Is Christianity played out?' and the like discussions, of which we have heard so much lately," continued Dr. Parker with infinite scorn —"these spasms all fall back like bubbles in a river. As Festus says, 'There is nothing true but poetry; *Fiction is the higher truth.*'



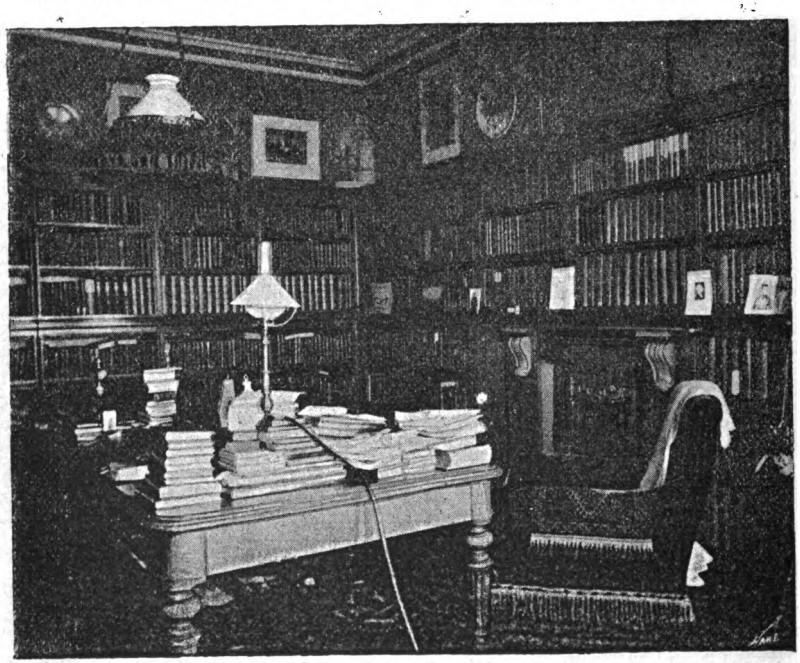
A KNOTTY POINT.

My great fault with the young men of to-day is that they don't read, at all events, after a scholarly and studious fashion. I believe with Pope, that 'a little learning is a dangerous thing.' Where is the young man who has mastered the ethics of Aristotle, or the republic of Plato, or who could stand an examination in Plutarch's 'Lives'? If these young men read more, they would believe more, but they have a foolish idea that to be sceptical is to be clever. 'I am an agnostic,' a man once said to Mr. Spurgeon. 'Oh, indeed!' said Mr. Spurgeon, 'that is a Greek word, is it not? I believe that the Latin word which has the same meaning is *ignoramus*.' I want young men to put away all this shilly-shallying with doubt and scepticism. I believe in young men—you know what I did in the pulpit the other day. I asked them to write and tell me all about themselves "—and, as he spoke, Dr. Parker pointed to a vast heap of correspondence— "and you see they are taking me at my word. I want to find out how young men live, their wages, their difficulties, their doubts, their special needs, their peculiar temptations, their whole

life as business men. A great revolution may be at hand so far as young men are concerned."

"And now," said he, "you had better come down and see Mrs. Parker in her studio." But before we quitted the study he drew my attention to a few of his household gods, his most treasured possessions.

"There," said he, pointing to a little Jubilee bust of Queen Victoria, "there is the best woman in the whole world—I can't tell you how I reverence that woman. God save Her Majesty. And



DR. PARKER'S STUDY.

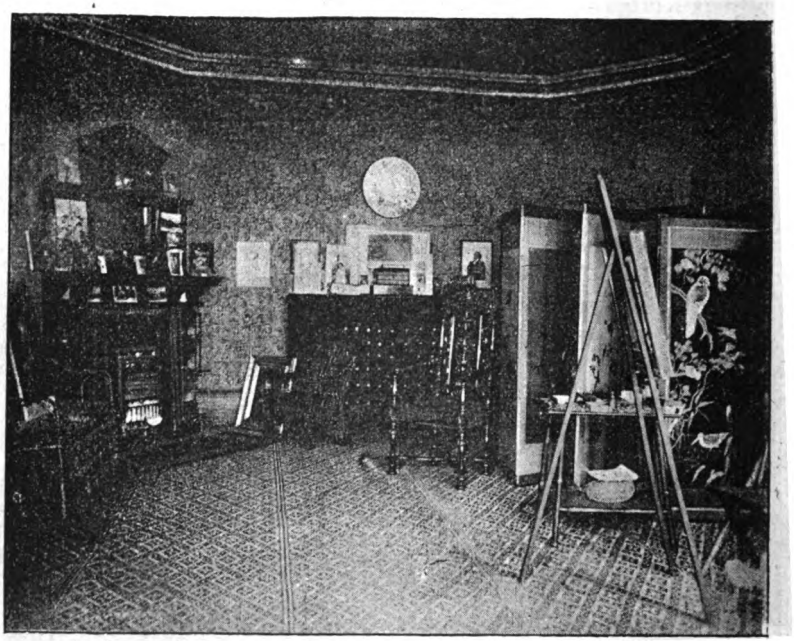
there," continued he, drawing my attention to one of his twenty-six portraits of Mr. Gladstone, "there is the best man in the whole world. On the mantelpiece you see portraits of Shakespeare, Browning, and Tennyson. Their teaching pervades all *my* teaching, I can tell you. I learn more from their books than from any except the Bible itself; and my books, look at my books, sermons by men of every school of thought. Anglican? Of course, why not? Canon Liddon, Robertson of Brighton, Canon Scott-Holland (I love that man), the old French Roman Catholic

preachers, the old Puritan divines, they are all here. No one has a better collection of Puritan theology than I; no one more thoroughly relishes the high, stimulating thought of the high Anglican party than I. Their delicate scholarship and rare refinement of expression are very keenly pleasurable to me. Yes, I read novels too. There is J. M. Barrie's 'Little Minister,' and Rudyard Kipling's 'Tales from the Hills,' and Jerome's 'Three Men in a Boat.' What should we do without the humour of these young men? We should soon dry up. Anyone who helps me to see the comical side of life is my best schoolmaster in his own way. Kipling is a relation of my wife's, though he does not know it. I like his ballads, I think they are splendid."

MRS. PARKER.

On our way down the staircase to Mrs. Parker's studio we passed a very fine bust of Henry Ward Beecher. "Ah!" said Dr. Parker, as we stopped to look at it for a moment, "we shall never look on his like in this world again."

In the studio itself we found Mrs. Parker hard at work upon a portrait of her father. "Mrs. Parker's father," my host remarked, "is a Congregational deacon, and a very admirable one he is; for, my friend, Congregational deacons are not always the most desirable persons to encounter. It has been said by those who know that if you resist the devil he will fly *from* you, but that if you resist a deacon he will fly *at* you."



MRS. PARKER'S STUDIO.

Mrs. Parker herself is almost as much of a personality as her husband. She is a tall, good-looking woman, whom one could well imagine presiding with dignity over a committee of Non-conforming dames. Her heart is in her husband's work, and she recks little or knows little indeed of the great world of fashion, the subdued roar of which scarcely reaches to the City Temple, or the ministerial abode in breezy Hampstead. She is what she appears to be—the energetic wife of a hard-working Nonconformist minister.

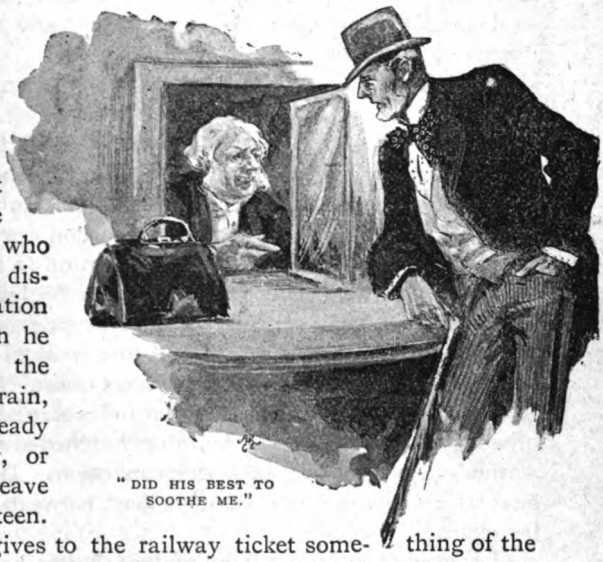
Dr. Parker has been caricatured more than any living preacher, and here, in Mrs. Parker's studio, the caricatures have all been cut out and hung in frames round the wall. They do not appear to disturb his wonted serenity.

Waiting for the Train.

By W. L. Alden.

Illustrations by Hal Hurst.

I WAITED for the train at Jericho. Not the historic city where the walls fell down at the blast of the Jewish trumpets, but an entirely new city in the territory of Montana. I had missed the train, owing to a sudden change of the time-table. The American loves the element of uncertainty, whether in poker or in railway travelling, and it is doubtless a perception of this fact which leads the American railway companies to change their time-tables every few weeks without giving the slightest warning to the public. The man who lives at some little distance from the station never knows, when he starts to catch the eleven o'clock train, whether it has already left at ten thirty, or whether it will not leave until twelve fifteen. This uncertainty gives to the railway ticket something of the charm of a lottery ticket, and, next to the Italians, no people cherish the love of lottery gambling as tenderly as do the Americans.



"DID HIS BEST TO SOOTHE ME."

I had expected to take a train which the time-table assured me would start at one o'clock, and when I found that, owing to a change of time-table, the train would not start until four o'clock, I was somewhat exasperated. The station-master, however, who was a jovial, garrulous person, so fat that he could hardly squeeze through the door of his ticket office, did his best to soothe me.

"You just set down on that there settee," he said, "until I get the one fifteen freight started, and I'll come and have a cigar with you, and a game of euchre. It's a little aggravatin', I admit, to be kep' here from one to four, but it ain't my fault." So saying he closed the window of his ticket office, and waddled out on to the platform, where he conferred with the conductor of a freight train that was waiting, apparently out of sheer laziness, as is the habit of freight trains, on a siding. When the conductor felt that the conversation was beginning to flag, he yawned, consulted his watch, and remarked to his driver that "we might as well mosey along." Whereupon the locomotive whistled, the train rumbled slowly on its way, and the station-master came into the waiting-room, and, offering me a large and rank cigar, dropped himself into a seat, wiped his brow with a bandanna handkerchief, and remarked that it was "seasonable weather."

I accepted his view of the weather, and then he asked me "where I might be going."

"To Athensville," I replied, naming a town some thirty miles from Jericho.

"You'll find it a pretty lively town," said the station-master. "There ain't no flies to speak of on that town—I know, for I've lived there myself. Do you calculate to locate there?"

I told him that I only expected to spend a week at Athensville. "It's a pity you don't make up your mind to locate there," continued my entertainer. "There's money lying all round the streets of that town waiting for enterprising men to come along and pick it up. Not that there's any want of enterprise among the people themselves. Why there's more churches and more saloons in that town, in proportion to its size, than there is in any other town in Montana. And the churches ain't standing empty, neither. People take an interest in them. Did you happen to hear about the row the Baptists had between the preacher and the choir?"

I answered that the fame of that battle had not yet reached me.

"I'll tell you about it," said the station-master. "It'll interest you, especially if you're a pious man, and I calculate, from your not cussin' about the train, that you are. Besides, it'll give you an idea of the enterprising spirit of the people."

The station-master drew up another chair, on which he comfortably disposed his legs, and then, running a long steel pin, which he carried in the lapel of his coat, through his cigar, with a view to encouraging it to draw, he began his narrative.

"The First Baptist Church had had a lot of trouble with its pastors. I don't know who was to blame, and it ain't my business to inquire, I being a Methodist, though I used to be a Presbyterian. I come over to the Methodists shortly after I went into the railroad business. A man has got to be able to cuss pretty lively if he is going to get on in railroading, and it's against the regulations for a Presbyterian to cuss. Now a Methodist ain't coupled up so tight. He can swear now and then if it seems to be desirable. It's only falling from grace, and he can straighten the whole thing out the next time there is a revival.

"THIS CHOIR ALWAYS GAVE TROUBLE."

"However, this hasn't got anything to do with the story. As I was saying, the Baptists had so much trouble with their preachers that it got to be difficult for them to fill their pulpit when a vacancy took place. Last year they called the Rev. Dr. Jones, whom you've probably heard of. He was the man who preached seven hours and thirty-three minutes on a stretch at the Rifletown camp meeting two years ago, and won the championship of the

North-west for long range preaching. Now, the Doctor is a mighty smart man, and he knew the reputation of the Athensville Baptists, and he didn't intend to accept their call, and then be turned out in six or eight months. So he refused to come unless they would give him a written contract for three years, and he stuck to it until they gave him the contract, thinking it would be a great thing for their Church to have the champion of the North-west in their pulpit.

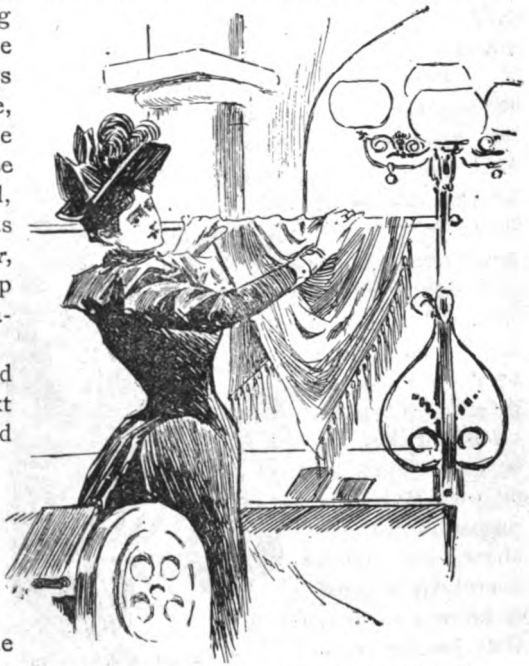
"The Baptists pride themselves on their choir, and take it by and large it is the next best thing to Moore and Kelly's Minstrels that I ever heard, and I've heard a good deal of music at one time and another. But this choir always gave trouble. There were pretty girls in it, and there were young men in it, and only a small percentage of them were sanctified. It's a curious thing that you very seldom meet a choir where the members are hopefully pious. Seems as if the minute a man or a woman gets religion they lose their voices as far as singing goes.

"Well! it was only natural that this choir should do a good deal of flirting, and general carrying on during the sermon, when they were off duty. There were green baize curtains in front of the choir, and the members used to draw them when the sermon began, and shut themselves off from the sight of the parson and the congregation. There was no objection to the curtains, and no sensible person would have made any objection to a reasonable amount of flirting, provided it was done decently and in order, young people being young people, and it not being expected that a choir should be pious. But thishyer choir couldn't carry on quietly. Every now and then you'd hear a laugh, or maybe a slap, or maybe a remark, such as 'Go away!' or 'Ain't you ashamed of yourself?' or 'Behave now!' This distracted the attention of the people from the sermon, and annoyed the preacher. Half-a-dozen preachers had tried to stop it, but the choir had beat them every time, and in the end the preachers gave it up and left.

"Doctor Jones was a hard man to beat in whatever way you might tackle him. Besides, he had a contract for three years in his pocket, and that made him independent. The second Sunday after he came to Athensville, the choir interrupted his sermon several times. He said nothing at the time, but in the course of the week he let it be generally known that he was going to fight that choir, and meant to win.

"This created a good deal of excitement in the place. The

betting was three to one on the choir, for it had always won in previous difficulties, and the majority of the people didn't understand Dr. Jones's plan of campaign. The next Sunday, when the choir came into the gallery, they found that the green baize curtain had been taken away, and that they must do their flirting under the eyes of the audience. But the leading soprano had a remarkably level head. She took off her shawl, and pinned it over the front railing of the gallery. The other women singers followed her example, and then the whole choir carried on worse than ever. First blood, as you might say, was allowed to the choir, and the odds went up to four and four-and-a-half to one.



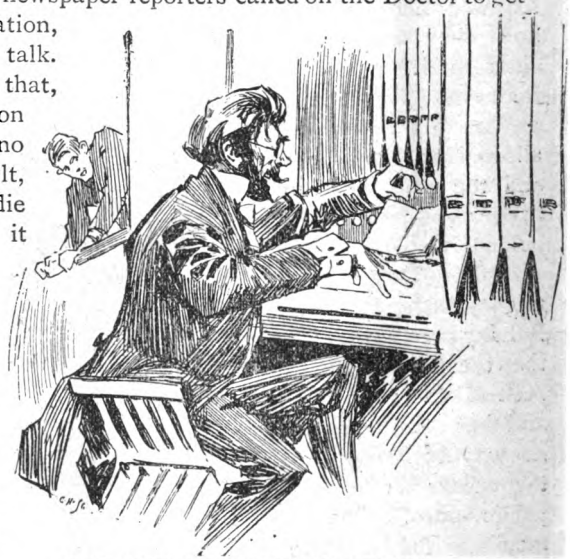
"PINNED HER SHAWL OVER THE FRONT RAILING."

"The Doctor said mighty little, but next Sunday the choir found that the railing had been taken away, and that there was no way of hiding themselves from public gaze. The members did a little whispering together, but they sat pretty quiet till the preacher gave out the hymn that comes in just before the sermon. It was a middling short hymn that he gave out, but the choir didn't sing it. I don't know as you are familiar with the Baptist hymn book. If you are, you will remember that it has one hymn consisting of three hundred verses—which is meant to be sung in sections—same as we run a train that is too long for one engine. Well, when the preacher gave out his hymn, with, it might be, four verses, the choir paid no attention to him, but started in to sing the three-hundred-verse hymn, and, b'gosh! they sung it! They sung it, too, to the slowest tune in their whole vocabulary, and it lasted for two mortal hours.

W W

"The preacher could not get in a word while the singing was going on, for between the verses the organ played its very loudest, and, of course, the whole services were brought to a standstill. When the hymn was ended, it was far too late for any preaching, for it was nearly an hour past everybody's dinner-time, and all the women were on pins and needles, knowing that the meat in the oven, and all the rest of the cooking, would be burnt to a coal. The preacher said nothing, and everybody allowed that the choir had come out a long way ahead, and the odds took another rise up to seven to one, with mighty few takers.

"That week the newspaper reporters called on the Doctor to get his views of the situation, but he refused to talk. He merely said that, having the right on his side, he had no doubt about the result, and was ready to die in his tracks if it should be necessary in order to defend the principles of his religion. This, of course, was the proper spirit to show, but what everybody wanted to know was, how the Doctor proposed to get ahead of the choir, and whether he really had any plan or not.



"THE ORGAN PLAYED ITS VERY LOUDEST."

"Another Sunday came round, as they will do, and you can't help yourself. The choir went into the ring with smiling faces, as though they felt sure that they had already won, and the people were half inclined to give them three cheers—not because they approved of the principles that the choir represented, but because they couldn't help admiring the skill and pluck with which they kept their end up. When it came time for the preacher to give out the first hymn, he never gave it out at all, but hove in a long Scripture reading in its place. Then he had the usual prayer, in which he made it pretty hot for

the choir, it being his innings, and he naturally making the most of it. Then he had some more Scripture reading, during which the choir began to get uneasy. They whispered together, and, as it was afterwards understood, agreed to rush in with a hymn the moment the preacher finished his prayer. Their idea was to sing the three-hundred-verse hymn over again, and so keep the minister from preaching, just as they had done the last Sunday. But Doctor Jones was too smart to be caught out twice in the same way. He meandered along with his prayer until he was pretty near the end of it, and then he asked for a blessing on the sermon, 'which will be as follows.' Those were his very words, and then, without the least interruption, he sandwiched a whole sermon into that prayer, and preached for three hours by the clock. His sermon was directed at the choir, and he showed that flirting in church was blasphemy of the tallest kind, and that preventing a preacher from delivering a sermon was about four shades worse than murder. The choir stood it for two hours, and then they all got up and went out. The Doctor preached right along until his sermon was finished, and then he finished up the tag end of his prayer and dismissed the congregation. Most of them were dead tired, as was natural after three hours of sermon, but they could appreciate good fighting when they saw it, and they came round the preacher and shook hands and congratulated him on his signal victory. That is, all but those who had put big money on the choir and couldn't afford to lose it, for it was clear enough that the preacher was going to win, and that the choir knew that they were beaten."

"HIS SERMON WAS DIRECTED AT THE CHOIR."

"Was that the end of it?" I asked, as the station-master paused in his narrative and went to the door.

"No," he replied, as he returned to his seat. "I was just a-looking for a wild cat that generally comes along about this time, and that will run into the Pacific express if she don't get on to this siding inside of ten minutes. No, there was life in the choir yet, and the Doctor knew too much to push his victory too far. There pretty generally comes a time in every fight when a wise man sees that a compromise is wanted Doctor Jones saw this, and he proposed a compromise. There was a lumber room

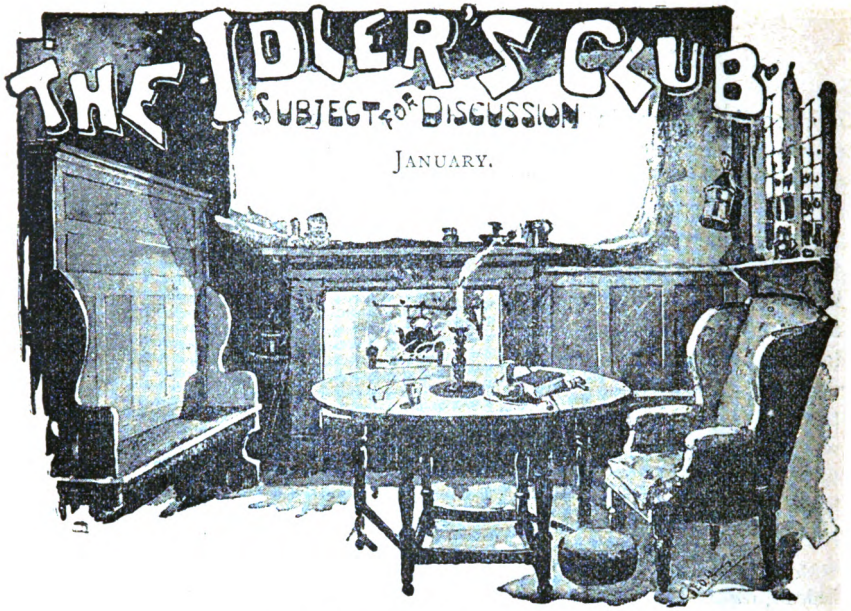
"THERE WAS EVERY OPPORTUNITY FOR FLIRTING."

in the tower, just behind the organ, and the Doctor proposed that this should be fitted up as a settin' room, and that the choir, when they were not due to sing, should have the privilege of going into the room and passing the time as they might see fit. In this way the choir would get rid of hearing the sermon, and the audience would get rid of hearing or seeing the choir in the act of miscon-

ducting themselves in the sacred edifice. The Doctor said that, of course, if they were Church members, he should insist upon their hearing the sermon for the benefit of their souls, but seeing as they were worldlings, all that he was bound to do was to see that they did not disturb the congregation.

"This compromise was accepted, and the choir, after the room was fitted up, spent most of their time in it. There was every opportunity for flirting, and there was always lemonade on the table. They do say that the tenor and the bass used to play euchre during the sermon, but I don't more than half believe it, though they were both pretty middling bad men. Doctor Jones was perfectly satisfied with the result of the fight, and the choir felt that they were better off than ever before. So you see everybody was satisfied. Even the men that had put their money on the choir came out all right, for when the question who had won was referred by mutual consent to a committee of deacons belonging to sister denominations, it was decided that, as the fight had been compromised, it must be considered a draw, and that all bets were off.

"That's the story of the great Baptist fight in Athensville, and there's that wild cat. Some day she'll be about a minute late in getting on to that siding, and there'll be the biggest kind of a smash-up in front of this station. There's the Pacific express now, whistling just beyond Smith's Bridge. She'll be along here in three minutes. Just come out on the platform and see her pass. She'll hustle, you can bet your sweet life."



Barr offers a fortune.

We all know of the man who was offered Chicago for a pair of boots, but who, alas! did not happen to have the boots. His profit would have been large to-day if he could have made the exchange. The world is full of men who had not the necessary footware when their particular Chicago was offered them. Those who had the boots are the millionaires of to-day. Fortune is said to knock at every man's door at least once in a lifetime. It proves a run-away knock in many cases; nevertheless, so careless is mankind that often a genuine knock by Madame Fortune is not answered at the door. Some men are so stupid that, if a fortune were presented to them, they would not have the sense to take it. It is on record that a person once stood on London Bridge all day and offered a trayful of real sovereigns at a penny each, but found no purchasers. All this preliminary is merely to pave the way for the offer of a fortune, to start the New Year with, which I am about to make, hoping to find a man who will accept it. I give away the fortune without asking even a coupon to be cut and sent in to *The Idler*. It may be asked (people are *so* suspicious in this world) why I do not take this fortune myself and enjoy the proceeds thereof. To that I make reply that I have money enough, and do not wish to encumber myself with more. It is such a bother to take care of superfluous cash. I might give it away, of course, but I do not wish to alienate my friends by giving them money, and, not being on speaking terms with my enemies, I cannot therefore offer them the surplus of my abundance. Still, I am trying now to give this fortune away, neither to a friend nor an enemy, but to the gentle reader.

If you ask anyone who knows, he will tell you that the kind of invention which produces large fortunes is not a costly and complicated machine, however ingenious, but a small, cheap, useful article that everybody needs. The contrivance which is to produce the fortune I am giving away is not a new device; it is already popular in the United States. All that is necessary is to persuade, perhaps, a dozen men in Europe that it is a good thing. The rest is simple, and the person who gets the monopoly of this little article is a made man. The device is simply a Continental thousand mile book, good on all the railways of England and the Continent. In America the thousand mile book is in daily use, and is a very great convenience. Each railway issues its own thousand mile book, but doubtless the time will come there when these books will be good on all lines. Some railways issue these tickets in little books of 10, 50, or 100 pages, with 100, 20, or 10 miles on a page. The pages are perforated like a sheet of postage stamps, each stamp representing a mile. If you travel ten miles, the conductor takes out ten stamps and gives you back the rest of the book. Other companies issue the thousand mile ticket in covers, the ticket being a tremendously long strip of paper, folded between, and marked off into one thousand divisions. If you travel, say, 120 miles, the conductor pulls out the ticket as if it were a tape measure, and tears it off when he has run out 120 divisions. There is no booking or stamping required. You buy as many books as you wish at a ticket-office down town as if they were packets of cigarettes, and then you can get on any train at any station and travel as many miles as you have stamps in your book. Prices vary, but, as a general thing, you can get a thousand mile ticket in Chicago for $20, or £4, which is about a penny a mile first-class. One railway in Canada issues thousand mile books, but you must produce the book at the station where you begin your journey, the booking-clerk taking out the number of miles you wish to travel, and giving you in exchange a regular ticket for that distance, but, as a general rule, you simply hand your book to the conductor, and the ticket is good for a year. Partially-used or complete books are as saleable as gold in nearly all the cities of the United States, "scalpers," as they are called, having offices for the selling or buying of them.

What a thousand mile ticket is.

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Now, if these thousand mile tickets are considered a great convenience in the United States and Canada, where the same language obtains throughout the whole continent, imagine what a boon they would be to a traveller roaming over Europe. In America every conductor is bound to carry an official table of distances, and in Europe every guard could do the same. I believe Bradshaw gives the distances on all lines, so there would be no trouble on that score. The Continental book would, probably, have to be

Can it be acclimated in Europe?

in kilometres, and not in miles. The price might be arranged, say, at a penny a mile second class and three-halfpence a mile first. All tickets ought to be unlimited in time. The limited ticket is an outrage and a swindle. If you buy a ticket and don't travel on it for ten years the railway company has no right to complain. It has the use of your money all that time for nothing. Imagine the Bank of England taking five sovereigns from you and giving you in return a £5 bank note, good for 30 or for 45 days! The thing is too absurd to mention even, yet the railway companies are doing an exactly similar action every day, and we stand it, because we are a good and patient people. However, that is a battle to be fought in the future; let us return to our thousand kilometre muttons. These tickets, then, will be bought and sold in any town in England or the Continent. Their issue would largely increase travel, and so enrich the railways. But to the bewildered man, who is not just certain that he talks his own language correctly, they would be "a sweet boon," as A. Ward said of The Tower. There would be no worry over the currency, and no struggle at Continental booking-offices trying to make the clerk understand where you want to go. They booked me once to Hamburg when I wanted to go to Homburg, and I missed my train at Rome another time because I didn't know two-syllabled Naples was three-syllabled Napoli. Of course, *you* always get along all right, but I'm talking now of and for the ordinary every-day English-speaking dunderhead like myself. It may be said that if you take a tourist ticket from the admirable Cook or the estimable Gaze you do not have to trouble foreign booking-clerks. That is partly true, but you are at once restricted as to route and as to time. These two reputable firms, like certain magistrates, give 30 or 45 days, and sometimes, but rarely, two months. Turning again to myself (there is nothing like showing a horrible example), I write these words in the Tyrol. I could not tell the worthy Cook nor the respectable Gaze my route, because I hadn't the slightest idea one day where I would go the next. They couldn't tell me either, and so I played the trip off my own bat. I started in Holland, with an abominable currency, consisting of rixdollars, guilders, stivers, and *bric-à-brac* of that sort. The booking-clerk insisted on sending me to Berlin and not to Brussels. In Belgium I got among the more familiar francs; in Germany, next day, I was among marks and ten-pfennig pieces, that we fondly try to think equal pennies, which they don't. In Switzerland once more the franc; in Austria there are florins and kreutzers, and other like horrors that a man never quite gets the hang of, and so it goes. I know I've been cheated all along the line, but for the life of me I cannot tell how much, and that always worries a man. He doesn't so much mind being cheated if he knows the exact amount. To sum up, if any man can persuade the dozen or more European railway managers that a universal thousand kilometre ticket will be a good thing both for the

railways and the travelling public, and if that man can get a monopoly on the sale of those tickets, he will be richer than Rothschild in five years.

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Alden on the bicycle.

All summer we have been dreading the advent of cholera. January is now here and we have no cholera, but all the time an infinitely worse epidemic has been devastating London. At least a thousand cases of bicycle riding occur in this city every day, and on Saturdays and Sundays the number of cases probably reaches four or five thousand. On the latter days the streets leading out of London are nearly impassable on account of bicycles spinning along at a rate of ten or fifteen miles an hour, and running down men, women, and children with perfect impartiality. Not content with killing or maiming their victims, the bicycles carry bells or trumpets for the dissemination of heart-disease. Twenty times a day I hear a bell rung just behind me, and leap madly aside with a heart beating about a hundred and fifty to the minute. When you see the dead carts going down Oxford Street or Clapham Road on Saturday nights, and gathering up the killed and wounded so as to make the streets passable for ordinary traffic, you think you have some idea of the horrors of the bicycle, but you haven't. Go to the hospitals and see the thousands that are suffering from heart-disease brought on by sudden bicycle shocks, and then you will begin to think that the cholera is not worth mentioning by the side of the devastation wrought by the bicycle. Moreover, the bicycle is rendering the public as callous to human suffering as were the Romans in the days of gladiatorial shows. There are people who find it actually amusing to watch from an upper window a bicycle in the act of mowing down a long procession of sandwich men, but it is certainly a brutal taste which can take delight in the killing or maiming of helpless men—with, of course, the exception of organ-grinders, and the wretches who sell vegetables and flowers at the top of their lungs, through streets that would otherwise be comparatively quiet.

* * * *

And his remedy.

It is some slight comfort to know that the bicyclist dies at an early age of disease of the heart or the spine. Still, other bicyclists immediately take his place, and his death does no more real and lasting good than did the burning of Chicago, followed as it was by the immediate rebuilding of that uncalled-for city. There, however, is a remedy for the bicycle plague which would be thorough and permanent. It is evident to the most careless observer that the bicycle is only a variety of treadmill, and the treadmill has long been recognised as admirably adapted to meet the wants of the criminal population. Let our courts have power hereafter to sentence criminals to the bicycle instead of the treadmill. In a short time our streets will present the frequent spectacle of

criminals, clad in striped uniforms, bending over their bicycles, and publicly working out their sentences. When this sight becomes common, the amateur bicyclist will refuse to run the risk of being mistaken for a criminal, and he will sell his bicycle for old steel. We cannot make bicycle-riding a misdemeanour, for the bicyclists are so numerous that no party could venture to face a general election after having made bicycle-riding unlawful. We can, however, crush out the nuisance by substituting the bicycle for the treadmill as a punishment for crime.

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Zangwill's New Year resolution.

During the silly season of the year before last (to enable the sea-serpent to have a year off) I agreed to write a serial for the *Star*. Of course it was about a murder (it may be as well to admit that I committed that murder in all seriousness, since the *Morning Post* said the skit was somewhat laboured), and the puzzle was, "Find the Murderer." During the run of the story readers kept sending in unsolicited solutions, and when it was finished the editor asked me to say something about their letters, as he had not acknowledged them in any way. Thereupon I wrote a letter to the paper, thanking the solvers for their kindly attempts to help me out of the mess into which I had got the plot. I did not like to wound their feelings by saying straight out that they had failed one and all to hit on the real murderer, just like real police, so I tried to break the truth to them in a roundabout mendacious fashion. I stated that I was determined no one should guess the mystery, and so whenever any reader sent in the name of one of the characters as that of the murderer, I ticked off that name and determined he or she should be innocent, whosoever might swing for it. Thus, said I, when I came to wind up the story, I found all the characters ticked off except one, and so I had no option but to bring him in guilty. One would have imagined that no one could have taken this seriously—not even the editor of a comic paper—for it is obvious that the mystery-story is just the one species of story which cannot be told impromptu or altered at the last moment, seeing that it demands the most careful piecing together, and the most elaborate dovetailing. Nevertheless, if you cast your joke upon the waters you shall find it no joke after many days. This is what I read last January in the *Lyttelton Times*, New Zealand: "The chain of circumstantial evidence against the falsely-accused Tom Mortlake seems fairly irrefragible. From all accounts Mr. Zangwill himself was puzzled, after carefully forging every link, how to break it. The method ultimately adopted I consider more ingenious then convincing." After that I made up my mind never to joke again, but this good intention was shortly afterwards bought up cheap by a firm which had obtained the contract for paving a popular winter resort.

He recalls old times.

In those days I was editing a paper. I wanted it to be original, and so I instructed my dramatic critic to write the truth about plays and actors. Nowadays, I know better. I am convinced that truth lives at the bottom of a well only to evade service of the writs for libel. One morning, I got a letter from the husband of an American variety actress complaining bitterly of the injustice of our criticism. His language was more melodramatic than grammatical. I wrote a line in reply, expressing my regret that he should object to honest criticism. Back came a letter full of righteous indignation, charged with the pathos of outraged virtue. He object to honest criticism, forsooth! The mere suspicion pained him. "So far from objecting to honest criticism," he wrote, "*I have often paid for articles attacking my wife!*" The italics belong to me; they are the only commentary I shall make upon the confession, the morals of which are as numerous as they are delicious! Of course the attempt to run a paper upon my lines failed, the organ perishing of arrested circulation; but I was reminded of this theatrical episode only the other day, when I received a letter from a gentleman applying, with a flourish of credentials, for the post of dramatic critic. This put me into a quandary. I did not know what to reply. It was like that question of the old Greek Sophist: "When did you leave off beating your mother-in-law?" Not to answer the applicant would appear discourteous; a blunt refusal would annoy him even more, while to reproach him with ignorance of a fact which he should have ascertained before writing would be most galling of all. In the end I let him down as gently as I could by writing: "Dear Sir,—Owing to the non-existence of the paper, I do not propose to make any change in the dramatic department at present."

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Phillpotts resolves.

I make no apology for being perfectly serious to-day, because the beginning of a New Year always finds me so. The man who walks into January with a light heart must be more or less of a thoughtless fool. We have burnt the yule log, we have drunk the wassail, we have scattered abroad the customary expressions of peace and goodwill; now Christmas has gone, and we stand face to face with 1894. He is only a funny baby as yet, he does not promise well, but he is good for a twelvemonth's run, and during that period each and all of us will be absolutely at his mercy. Of course, I am not going to preach or give advice, but I shall firmly indicate to-day a line of conduct: the particular line I design myself to adventure. I have made certain resolves—certain rational, unambitious, every-day resolves—and without being a slave to these New Year determinations, without permitting them at all times to ride rough-shod over my inclinations, I shall give them a fair trial and a fair

field. Some of these intentions apply peculiarly to my own case, and I do not feel called upon to publish them here or anywhere, but others are of a general, salutary sort, likely to benefit the average man in his goings and comings and eternal battle with life's problems. These, to the number of six, I set out here: the rule or resolve first, the logical force and utility of it afterwards.

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And makes rules.

(1.) Don't be up so early in the mornings. This longing to rise with the sun is merely a savage fragment of the old aboriginal instincts which naturally obtained before artificial light was understood. People then went to bed when it grew dark and rose as soon as they could see. The earliest bird catches the fattest worm, and suffers from the worst indigestion. An early bird is a bit of Nature; an early man is a disgrace to nocturnal civilisation. Never, therefore, be visible to your fellows till the day is well aired. Let it be your wife's ghastly privilege alone to see you in the soul-searching light of early morning. (2.) Spend more money upon yourself. Never forget that you can only live your life once through. When it is over, no further opportunities for having a real, tangible good time are likely to occur. Recollect that *selfish* pleasure is an impossible abstraction invented by cranky Sophists. You cannot indulge in any manly recreation of any sort without putting good money into the pocket of some more or less deserving person. (3.) Drink more. Stimulant is a necessity under the artificial conditions which govern society at present. Providence knows this, and places the means of life at every street corner. Increase your customary allowance steadily. Give your vital centres a fair chance in this matter. See how much you can do with. It is almost better to have none than not enough. (4.) Back horses now and then. Remember that by so doing you are indirectly improving the breed of horses. You are also adding your mite to maintain a glorious British institution, and helping alike to sweeten the home and brighten the prospects of the sporting tipster whose advice you follow and the small bookmaker with whom you transact your business. (5.) Don't break your heart trying to live within your means. Recollect that no man yet ever got all he deserved. Therefore you have not got what you deserve. By refusing to incur debts, you are simply submitting to an arbitrary and despotic Providence. Therefore rollick on the basis of the imaginary income your real parts entitle you to; don't dream of starving upon the real pittance that bully Fate has unjustly awarded you. To follow this rule requires a fair measure of intelligence, but a little practical experiment will serve to develop my meaning quicker than anything. (6.) Continue to go on pretty much as you are going. What was good enough for 1893 ought to be good enough for 1894. Enlarged, this rule means, just grub on working for yourself, thinking of yourself, living, lying, struggling, sweating for No. 1 as usual. Remember that the

devil takes the hindmost, if you happen to be in front; and if your place is at the rear, recollect cheerfully that the same devil often drops heavily upon your brothers in the van.

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Gribble remembers something.

Tradition has ordered that the early days of January shall be sacred to the memory of unrealised ambitions; and, at this moment, I am reminded of a certain abandoned project of my own. For, once upon a time, I meditated the compilation of a birthday book, which was to be quite different from all the other birthday books. It was to be a Cynic's Birthday Book, and, instead of quotations from the Bible, or Shakespeare, or Martin Farquhar Tupper, it was to contain a cynical sentiment for every day in the year. The notion was put into my head by a sermon in which the preacher had complained of the increasing wickedness of the world. Since the cup of our iniquity was so full, it seemed to me that there must necessarily be a public demand for a volume consisting of three hundred and sixty-six stray iniquitous observations. So I set to work industriously. I wrote down on a piece of paper all the most wicked epigrams that I could remember to have heard. Then I tried to perpetrate sundry cynicisms out of my own head. I wrote that "the cynicism of one generation is the proverbial philosophy of the next," that "misconduct is three-fourths of life," and that "the consciousness of good work well done is not nearly so gratifying as the consciousness of bad work well paid for."

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Which never came to anything.

The years pass, however, and my Cynic's Birthday Book has not yet appeared. I should be glad to think that the reason is that I am incapable of the sustained wickedness requisite for its satisfactory completion. But the real trouble lies, I fear, in the liability of cynicism to repeat itself, and the difficulty of getting together as many as three hundred and sixty-six distinct cynicisms with a sincere and genuine ring about them. To invert a proverb, as Mr. Oscar Wilde so often does, is, as a rule, merely to be cynical under false pretences. The cynicism which goes deep down into the human soul, striking a responsive chord in the bosom of every man who has a proper potentiality of wickedness, is hard to find. Perhaps, if all the most wicked literary men of the day would co-operate in the search, three hundred and sixty-six of them would at last be brought to light; but I am quite sure that no single wicked man can possibly be wicked enough to discover so many without assistance.

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G. R. Sims objects to January.

The principal objection to January is that it causes considerable confusion in the dating of letters and cheques, being the first month of a new year. It is also a very worrying month to superstitious people, and there never lived a man or a woman worth his or her salt who

was not superstitious. All through January one is nervously sensitive on the subject of things going wrong. It is beginning the year so badly, don't you know! Beyond that there was not so much to be said against it as a month until it pleased the editors of *The Idler* to select it as a subject for Club gossip. Why January? Mr. Facing Both Ways Janus, to whom we are indebted for the name of the first month of the year, presided over the gates and avenues of thought, and through him only could prayer reach the immortal gods, but he refuses absolutely to open the gates and avenues of thought to me in connection with his own particular and private month.

* * * *

In every clime.

January includes New Year's Day and Twelfth Night, but New Year's Day was severely dealt with by the Club in a previous discussion, and to deal conscientiously with Twelfth Night one has to conjure up visions of a long-vanished childhood. As to the first of January I have spent it in many parts of Europe, and once in Africa (it was only in Algiers, but after all that *is* in Africa), and if the subject had been the first of January only I could have dwelt upon that New Year's Day, on which I walked through six inches of snow from the railway station at Nice to my hotel, and found everybody who had come South, in search of sunshine and warmth, cowering round small, freshly Brunswick-blacked, and consequently evil-smelling, stoves. I could have produced with a flying pen a graphic description of the *Jour de l'An* in Paris, or I could have narrated the adventures which befell me long years ago in Bonn, when I commenced the New Year in the company of two German *gens d'arme*, who locked me up for having on the previous evening dropped lighted vesuvians on the umbrella of a venerable professor who stood for some time under my window in a snow-storm conversing with a friend. But that is another story.

* * * *

And moralises thereon.

I once knew a little boy who was christened January, and who went through this vale of tears as January Jones, Esquire, bearing malice towards his godfather and godmother, but the only really famous January was the elderly Lombard Baron of that name who married the youthful Miss May, and was afterwards convinced that dimness of sight was the sole cause of the jealous pangs he suffered. How many of us, like Baron January, are willing in all earthly things to be persuaded that our defective eyesight is to blame for that which appeareth evil unto us. And having found a moral in connection with January, like a wise man, I will search no further, but say, with the Father of English poetry—

> Now goodë men, I pray you to be glad;
> Thus endeth here my tale of January—
> God blesse us and his mother Saintë Mary.

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